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The mediating role of celebrity endorsement in stimulating purchases of ESG-oriented goods in Nigeria's fast-moving consumer goods sector

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Abstract. Social and environmental corporate responsibility is becoming increasingly important in organizational operations and production processes. This is due to increased consumer awareness about the importance of ESG factors. Meanwhile, there is the aspect that celebrities play crucial role in influencing purchasing behaviours of the younger generations. The study is devoted to investigating the mediating influence of celebrity endorsement on ESG-oriented purchase. The methodological basis of the study is an integrative approach following stakeholder theory, generational theory, and the meaning transfer model. The data were assessed using econometric methods namely regression analysis. The study used primary data obtained through an online survey of 384 respondents belonging to Generation Z and Millennials. The research findings demonstrate a significant positive impact of ESG-factors awareness and celebrity endorsements on consumer purchase decisions. The study confirmed that celebrity endorsements of ESG-related products significantly influence purchase decisions among Gen Z and Millennials. The empirically proven results confirm the need for not only implementing ESG practices, but also to disseminate consumer awareness about that. Celebrity endorsement significantly mediated the relationship between awareness of ESG practices and purchase decision. The results may be useful in developing strategies to build ESG awareness to stimulate purchase among millennial and Gen Z consumers.

Keywords: consumer behaviour; ESG awareness; celebrity endorsement; purchase decision; fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG); Nigeria.

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Роль поддержки знаменитостей в стимулировании покупок ESG-ориентированных товаров повседневного спроса (на примере Нигерии)

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Аннотация. Социально-экологическая ответственность организаций на всех этапах производственных и управленческих процессов приобретает большую значимость, что обусловлено возросшей осведомленностью потребителей о важности внедрения и учета ESG-факторов. Малоизученным остается аспект влияния поддержки знаменитостей как лидеров общественного мнения на процесс принятия решений о ESG-покупках представителями молодого поколения. Исследование посвящено анализу опосредующего эффекта одобрения знаменитостей на потребительское поведение и мотивацию к покупкам ESG-ориентированных товаров повседневного спроса. Методологическую основу составили стейкхолдерская теория, теория поколений, ESG-подход и модель переноса смыслов. В работе использовались первичные данные, полученные методом онлайн-анкетирования 384 респондентов, относящихся к поколению Z и миллениалам. Оценка проводилась путем регрессионного анализа данных. Полученные результаты свидетельствуют о значительном положительном влиянии ESG и одобрения знаменитостей на принятие потребителями решения о покупке. Выявлено, что одобрение известными личностями ESG-принадлежности групп товаров широкого назначения в значительной степени влияет на решение о покупке среди представителей рассматриваемых поколений. Эмпирически подтвержденные гипотезы указывают на необходимость не только внедрения практик ESG, но и повышения осведомленности потребителей об этом. Поддержка со стороны знаменитостей играет важную роль медиатора в усилении связи между осведомленностью о ESG-практиках и решением о покупке. Результаты могут быть полезны при разработке стратегий продвижения и формирования ESG-осведомленности среди потребителей, принадлежащих к поколениям Z и миллениалам.

Ключевые слова: потребительское поведение; ESG-осведомленность; одобрение знаменитостей; решение о покупке; товары повседневного спроса; Нигерия.

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INTRODUCTION

ESG (environmental, social and governance) is a framework used to evaluate the sustainability and ethical impact of a company or an organization¹. In 2004, Kofi Annan, the UN secretary, requested that big banks work with the UN and the International Finance Corporation to find solutions for incorporating leadership, community, and environmental issues into the finance sector. With the release of the UN Global Compact Initiative's "Who Cares Wins" report in 2004, the term ESG was formally created. According to the report, the company would not be the only one to gain from integrating ESG drivers into decisions regarding investments. It would be commercially wise as well. The idea of ESG has surfaced in recent works as an advertising strategy to encourage people to make greener purchases because of the growing interest in sustainability issues [Mostafa, 2007; Kao, Du, 2020]. ESG pushes businesses to prioritize their future sustainability goals over the more conventional primary goal of profit maximization.

Global environmental and societal challenges, such as unstable weather patterns, has heightened the need for sustainable approaches to organization processes. As a result, the rapidly growing consumer goods industry has experienced significant transformation, moving away from conventional approaches and towards more environmentally sound and sustainable ones [Naulleau et al., 2022]. Furthermore, today's consumers, if well informed about companies' sustainable practices through celebrities, will show increased preference for goods produced sustainably. Despite the effort of brands on ensuring they engage in sustainable practices, there is a clear lack of consumer enthusiasm for recognizing environmentally conscious methods, and this can have negative effects on businesses, such as decreased revenue or market shares. However, the participation of celebrities as endorsers of these eco-friendly products can be a game changer for brands.

The fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry plays an important role in consumers' day-to-day living by manufacturing products, such as food, beverages, cleaning supplies, and cosmetics. ESG is recently evolving into a cornerstone of public relations effort for FMCG companies. This is due to an increase in customers' awareness of ESG issues, and demand for responsibility and transparency [Aleksanova et al., 2024]. Some of Nigeria's leading FMCG companies include Unilever, Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Nigerian breweries and some of their ESG initiatives include using recyclable materials, sustainable packaging, community engagement, corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, waste management, and accountability and transparency framework. Modern consumers, though price conscious, are now paying at-

tention to environmental and social factors, they are becoming more environmentally and health conscious when making purchase decisions. Hence, FMCG companies must integrate sustainability into their strategies to ensure customer trust, loyalty, profitability and goodwill [Michalski, Low, 2024].

Celebrity endorsement has been popularised because of several factors, including cutthroat market competition and admiration for celebrities [Ohanian, 1990; Zipporah, Mberia, 2014]. In today's world, people seem to understand that products endorsed by celebrities are more likely to be purchased by consumers [Pandey, 2011].

Generally, it is observed that Nigerian consumers tend to associate celebrity-endorsed products with prestige and quality, which often results in higher sales volumes and stronger brand loyalty. This association is particularly evident in industries such as fashion, telecommunications, personal care, and the FMCG industry. One critical driver of this trend is the aspirational nature of Nigerian consumers' behaviour as many of them view celebrities as role models whose lifestyles they aspire to emulate.

This cultural dynamic enhances the effectiveness of endorsements, as consumers perceive purchasing endorsed products as a means of aligning with the celebrity's status and success. Furthermore, the recommendation of local celebrities fosters a sense of cultural pride and relatability, making the brand message more impactful.

This study focuses on the Gen Z and Millennial generations as they wield considerable buying power [Hanson-Rasmussen, Lauver, 2018]. Besides, they also represent 50.9% of the Nigerian population². The Gen Z and Millennial Generation are a youthful, internet savvy, educated, and unique consumer group who represents a sizable market opportunity for FMCG companies [Ketter, 2021]. Scholars have indicated that these young generations have an evident level of ESG awareness, high health consciousness, and have high societal responsibility expectations from businesses [Naderi, Steenburg, 2018]. Understanding their preferences is crucial for product development and choice of marketing campaigns.

Studies carried out over the years have shown the general aspects of the way in which celebrity endorsements affect the effectiveness of advertisements [Dutta, Singh, 2013; Kumari, 2018; Pratiwi, Sulhaini, 2018]. However, a useful but understudied research topic is the relationship between ESG practices, celebrity endorsements, and green purchasing behaviour in the FMCG industry. Very little attention has been paid to a thorough examination of the workers' union within the FMCG sector, even though some current research tends to break down these domains separately. Other research endeavours have examined the mediating

¹ Ferenc Y.P. ESG Indexes Through the Slump and Rally of 2020. MSCI (2020). <https://www.msci.com/documents/10199/b7a00b-cf-915b-3aed-f86d-e1c8aeb1300a#>.

² Pierrine Consulting. (2024). The New CSD Consumers in Nigeria: Gen-Zs, and an unusual suspect. <https://www.pierrine-consulting.com/csd-nigeria-gen-zs/>.

function of celebrities in other sectors, such as the world of tourism [Kamel, 2020] and the beverage sector [Szymkowiak, Antoniuk, 2024]. Given the significance associated with consumer goods, it is imperative to have a comprehensive understanding regarding these dynamics. Considering this, our study aims to fill this research gap along with advanced knowledge by providing a comprehensive examination of a topic that is mainly divided in the body of existing literature. The present research focuses on investigating the role that environmentally conscious celebrities play in the relationship between consumer purchase decisions and awareness of ESG practices. Hence, the specific purpose and objective of the research in relations to the FMCG industry are to:

- 1) examine the influence of awareness of ESG practices on purchase decisions;
- 2) explore the effect of celebrity endorsement on purchase decisions;
- 3) discover the mediating effect of celebrity endorsement on ESG-oriented purchase decisions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretical approaches to celebrity endorsement in ESG. The study is anchored on stakeholder theory and meaning transfer model. According to Freeman's [1984] stakeholder theory, a company's future worth is determined by its interactions with substantial stakeholders, including shareholders, lenders, clients, vendors, government officials, society at large, as well as additional parties [Post, Preston, Sachs, 2002]. Stakeholders' needs must be met, and if not, the organization will lose its credibility with the stakeholders. The role of stakeholders in a company's survival is significant. Firms actively pursuing "environmental, social and corporate governance" responsibility, enhance their goodwill with customers, thereby increasing their sales, profit and market share [Bofinger, Heyden, Rock, 2022; Tkachenko, Savchenko, 2024].

The Meaning Transfer Model, on the other hand, was first presented by McCracken [1989] and states that through the endorsement process, cultural meanings become attached to the endorsed goods by means of the celebrities themselves. Jain and Roy [2016] identified seven elements that define celebrity meaning: personality, reliability, physical characteristics, thoughts, effectiveness, important power, alongside values. In the context of ESG, this concept suggests that celebrities can transfer positive ESG-related meanings to products, services and brands, influencing consumer attitudes, preferences, and behaviours. Furthermore, consumers make inferences about the endorsed ESG-oriented brand, product, or service based on the cultural meanings associated with celebrity.

Based on the theoretical foundations the study explains that a company's ESG practices have an influence on consumer purchase decisions and celebrity endorsement mediates that influence.

Awareness of ESG practices and purchase decisions.

ESG is a framework used to evaluate the sustainability and ethical impact of a company or organization¹. They are a set of non-financial performance indicators that are used to evaluate a company's exposure to long term sustainability, risks and opportunities. Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) variables are now essential for an organization's sustainability. Corporate practices pertaining to energy consumption, waste disposal and emission reduction, resources conservation, supply chain sustainability and risk and opportunity management for the environment are referred to as environmental criteria.

Social factors include how a company treats staff, clients, communities, and suppliers, among other stakeholders that are significant. Product quality and safety, fair employment practices, growth for staff, product safety, confidentiality of information, sustainable procurement, workplace diversity and inclusion, and fostering community through engagement, philanthropy or corporate social responsibility are among the top priorities.

The systems, rules, and procedures that promote responsible marketing, accountability, transparency, responsibility, board supervision, compliance with regulation, relationship with investors, and prevent corruption throughout the company are the focus of governance [Adenan, 2024].

Gen Z and Millennials prioritize environmental sustainability and social responsibility when making purchase decisions. To attract and retain modern customers, businesses must strike a balance between transparency, social responsibility, environmental preservation, and economic benefits. They must respond to the growing demand for sustainable products by reducing the environmental hazards, ensure transparent communication about ESG initiatives, and enhance customer satisfaction through responsible business practices². Based on the above, the first hypothesis is:

H01: There is no significant influence of awareness of ESG practices on purchase decision.

Celebrity endorsement and purchase decisions.

According to Yang [2018], a celebrity is one who is well-known to many people in society and who has a broad reputation both locally and internationally for their accomplishments in their line of work. According to Min et al. [2019], celebrities may be additionally characterized as reference groups that significantly impact an individual's beliefs, intentions, and actions. Depending on their line of work, celebrities can take many different forms: politicians, musicians, athletes, movie stars, and others fall

¹ Global reporting Initiative (GRI). (2020). GRI Standards. <https://www.globalreporting.org/how-to-use-the-gri-standards/gri-standards-english-language/>.

² Peronne G. (2022). The story behind the term ESG. Twenty Now. <https://www.twentynow.com/sustainability-initiatives/people/the-story-behind-the-term-esg/>.

under this category [Kim, Kim, Han, 2019]. A celebrity can be used as an argumentative tool to influence consumers' purchase decisions, alter their perspective on the environment, encourage them to adopt an eco-friendly mindset, and establish them as people who care about sustainability [Jolly, 2016; Hani, Marwan, Andre, 2018].

According to Yang [2018], endorsement is an avenue for communication in which a celebrity serves as the spokesperson for a specific brand, extending their fame and personality to validate the business's claims and stance.

Selecting the appropriate celebrities to represent the brand is one of the biggest problems with celebrity endorsements in advertising [Carrol, 2009]. Several factors, including popularity, reliability, physical appearance, and the celebrity's fitness with the commercial's message, should be considered when choosing a suitable celebrity [Schouten, Janssen, Verspaget, 2020]. These traits typically have a direct impact on audience beliefs, assessments, and actions regarding the social and governance-compliant company Blasche and Ketelaar [2015]. From the above, the second hypothesis is:

H02: There is no significant impact of celebrity endorsement on purchase decision.

Celebrity endorsement mediates the relationship between ESG and purchase decisions of Gen Z and Millennials. Remaining relevant to the public is one of a celebrity's most important responsibilities, and when a celebrity is selected to educate the public view about a brand's ESG practices, the public will undoubtedly pay attention [Brockington, 2009]. According to Mansour and Diab [2016], audiences typically view celebrities as reliable sources of news regarding the brands they support, and the more credible the famous person is, the better received the message will be. By using goods and services, engaging in activities, and heeding advice associated with the person they admire most, people seek meanings according to celebrity endorsements. Customers who identify with a particular celebrity are more likely to have favourable opinions about any place, activity, brand, or product that the celebrity promotes [Yen, Teng, 2015].

According to Brown [2011], companies use celebrities to promote their ESG initiatives because they can attract the attention of their whole audience. Celebrities encourage good corporate social responsibility along with corporate governance practices, as well as safeguarding the environment. The Generational Cohort Theory (GCT) posits that people are divided into generations based on their placement in history which includes certain events that form specific attitudes and behaviours in each cohort [Moore, 2012]. Millennials include people born between 1981 and 1996, while Gen Z refers to people born from 1997 to 2012 [Hanson-Rasmussen, Lauver, 2018].

The two generations are socially conscious and have a high environmental concern. Hence, they are enthusiastic about participating in sustainable practices [Naderi,

Steenburg, 2018]. With Millennials being environmentally oriented, messages relayed through green advertising become increasingly accepted, which subsequently increases the level of their respective environmental orientation [Lu, Bock, Joseph, 2013; Cuomo et al., 2015]. A previous study by Pratiwi and Sulhaini [2018] positively demonstrated that green advertising significantly affects environmental attitudes as well as the intentions for green purchasing. Table 1 shows the summary of the empirical review of previous studies related to our research.

Gen Z and Millennials are very educated, sociable and always on the internet. They prefer watching visual content compared to reading a text [Kádeková, Holienčinová, 2018]. Communicating ESG practices to these generations can be enhanced using celebrities. Though Gen Z and Millennials are not being easily convinced, they respond well, and have a positive attitude towards meanings, products, messages, and brands endorsed by their favourite celebrities [Chan, Lee, Wong, 2018]. Hence, businesses can use celebrities to create awareness of their ESG initiatives to Gen Z and Millennials as this will lead to purchase decisions. When celebrities who are known for their ESG values endorse a brand, it can enhance the brand's reputation and influence purchase decisions among the two generations. Hence, authentic partnerships between brands and celebrities who share similar ESG values can make endorsements more effective and increase the loyalty of younger generations of consumers. Based on the above argument, it is hypothesized that:

H03: There is no mediating effect of celebrity endorsement on the relationship between awareness of ESG practices and purchase decision of Gen Z and Millennials.

As seen from Table 1, a decent attempt was made by Tripopsakul and Puriwat [2022] to examine customer response to ESG activities. Also, Al Mamun et al. [2023], Hossain et al. [2025], Mengyu [2022] and Calvo-Porrall and Lévy-Mangin [2024] measured the direct relationship between celebrity endorsement and consumer response. However, no author examined the indirect influence that celebrity endorsement has on the relationship between ESG activities and purchase behaviour except Kamel [2020], whose study focused on green advertising and not ESG. Furthermore, none of the reviewed articles considered the Nigerian market except Alagbe [2021], whose study ignored customers perspective. Therefore, this research fills the gap by examining the impact of customer awareness of organisation's ESG practices on consumer purchase decisions along with the mediating role of celebrity endorsement among younger consumers in the Nigerian fast-moving consumer goods sector. We suggest closing this gap with our study as shown in Fig. 1. It explains the interlinkage between the variables utilised in the study with celebrity endorsement serving as a mediator between the dependent and independent variables.

Table 1 – A review of studies on consumers' ESG awareness
Таблица 1 – Обзор исследований о ESG-осведомленности потребителей

Authors	Objectives	Sample	Hypotheses	Methodology	Findings
Tripopsakul and Puriwat [2022]	Impact of ESG activities on brand image and customers' purchase intentions	168 samples of Thai participants	ESG activities will have a positive effect on brand image and purchase intentions	Online questionnaire was used to collect data, while structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to test hypotheses	ESG activities significantly impact brand perception and consumer purchase intentions. Sociological variables mediated this relationship
Alagbe [2021]	Effect of environmental, social and governance on performance of international companies in Nigeria	Financial reports of 18 companies sampled for the investigation for the period of 2000–2020	Effect of environmental, social and governance on profit after tax (PAT) in Nigeria	Annual audited financial reports of panel data, and robust regression model	Social disclosure, environmental governance has an inverse relationship with PAT, while social cost had a positive significant impact
Calvo-Porrall and Lévy-Mangin [2024]	Influence of celebrity endorsement on the purchase behaviour of brands and product categories	Two consumer samples (315 for businesses and 308 for product categories)	Does consumer purchase behaviour influenced by celebrity endorsement differ between brands and products?	Multiple group mathematical modelling of structural equations	Variations in the efficacy of celebrity endorsements for different product categories and brands
Kamel [2020]	The mediating role of celebrities as endorsers in green advertising	580 Egyptian Millennials aged between 18–38	Green advertising positively impacts the intentions of Millennials towards environmental behaviours. Celebrity endorsement mediates the impact	Descriptive analysis, structural equation modelling (SEM) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)	Celebrity endorsement mediates the relationship between green advertisements and the intentions of Millennials to behave in a sustainable way in tourist destinations
Mengyu [2022]	Impact of celebrity environmental advertisements on the development of green economy	16 participants who viewed celebrity advertisements	To investigate the relationship between green economy and celebrity environmental advertising communication	Participant eye-movement data while viewing PSA images with and without celebrity endorsements. PLS-SEM analysis	PSAs featuring celebrities received greater and longer gazes and yielded a better re-cognition effect when compared with non-celebrity PSAs
Hossain et al. [2025]	Influence of celebrity credibility, celebrity attractiveness, and social media influence on trustworthiness, and how trustworthiness and social media affect perceived quality and purchase intention for natural beauty care products	Consumers who engage with natural beauty care products on social media	Celebrity attractiveness positively influences trustworthiness. Social media significantly affect trustworthiness. Celebrity credibility significantly impacts trustworthiness	PLS-SEM	Celebrity credibility has the most significant effect on trustworthiness, followed by celebrity attractiveness and social media influence. Social media influence significantly drives purchase intention
Al Mamun et al. [2023]	To evaluate the impact of celebrities' credibility attributes and consumers' interests in celebrities on their attitudes towards advertisements for endorsed green skincare products	778 Malaysian consumers	Trustworthiness, exquisite personality, expertise of celebrity endorsers positively influences Malaysian consumers' attitude towards endorsed green skincare product brands	PLS-SEM	Positive effects of credibility traits and customer attention to celebrities on their attitudes towards endorsed advertisements. Customers' companionship with celebrities also had a significant positive impact on attitudes towards brands

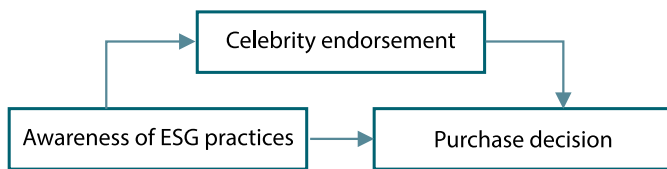


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework

Рис. 1. Концептуальная модель исследования

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study utilized descriptive research design and primary methods of data collection.

The target audience consisted of university students from Osun state, Nigeria who belonged to the Gen Z and Millennial Generations and were consumers of the leading companies in the fast-moving consumer goods sector, namely Unilever, Coca-Cola, and Nigerian Breweries. Over 400 responses were garnered; however, 384 responses were usable as they fall within the age range of the study. This is a satisfactory research sample size according to Kline [2011]. Purposive sampling was utilized in choosing the university students who are best suited for the study due to them being customers of the FMCG sector, their tendency to be familiar with celebrities and the ESG concept, and their belonging to the Gen Z and Millennials.

Research instrument. An internet-based 5-point Likert scaled questionnaire was used to gather data, with endpoints of "1" (strongly disagree) and "5" (strongly agree) for all variables. The questionnaire link was sent to students' social media class groups with additional information on who the qualified respondents are based on age, the understanding of the concept, and the patronage of the three leading FMCG brands. The questionnaire was filled out within three months (December 2024 – February 2025).

Measurement of variables. The questionnaire (see Appendix) of the current study was developed using previously used and validated scales adapted and adopted with little modifications; considering the study uniqueness and audience, some questions in the previous scales were amended, while others were replaced with new items. Items that measured ESG awareness and purchase decisions were adapted from the studies of Sim and Kim [2023] and Nugroho et al. [2024]. On the other hand, celebrity endorsement was measured based on items adopted from the study of Al Mamun et al. [2023] and Hossain et al. [2025]. Accordingly, the study measured environmental activities through 6 items, celebrity endorsements and governance factors – through 5 items, and 4 items were used to evaluate social factors and consumer purchase decisions. All the constructs demonstrated acceptable reliability with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.75 to 0.84; exceeding the recommended benchmark of 0.70, this indicates strong internal consistency.

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse socio-demographic variables, simple linear regression was uti-

lized to test the hypotheses, while Sobel test was applied to test the mediating effect of celebrity endorsement. The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 – Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents
Таблица 2 – Социально-демографические характеристики респондентов

Demographic factor		Frequency (N = 384)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	219	57.0
	Male	165	43.0
Age group	16–22	89	23.2
	23–29	151	39.3
	30–36	132	34.4
	37–44	12	3.1
Marital status	Single	318	82.8
	Married	66	17.2
Educational level	High school	178	46.4
	B.Sc.	157	40.9
	M.Sc./MBA	49	12.7

The demographic table reveals that out of 384 individuals surveyed, a greater proportion 57.0% (219 respondents) were female, while males made up 43.0% (165 respondents). In terms of age distribution, most respondents (240, or 62.5%) belonged to Generation Z while 144 (37.5%) were Millennials. This shows that the survey's population was predominantly youthful.

Regarding marital status, a significant majority totaling 318 individuals (82.8%) were single, while the remaining 66 respondents (17.2%) were married. This trend aligns with the youthful nature of the sample. In terms of the educational level, the highest proportion of respondents (178, or 46.4%) held the Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE); 157 individuals (40.9%) also possessed a bachelor's degree (B.Sc.); meanwhile, only a small fraction of the respondents (9 persons, or 12.7%) had a Master of Science (M.Sc.) or a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree. This indicates that the respondents were largely well educated, with the vast majority holding at least a secondary school certificate. The data collected were analysed using linear and multiple regression analyses and the Sobel test.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant influence of awareness of ESG practices on purchase decisions. This study will utilize a regression model $Y = a + b(x), \beta_0 + \beta_1 + \beta_2 \dots + e$.

The model for the first hypothesis is stated as follows:

$$\text{PURDEC} = f(\text{ESGP}), \text{PURDEC} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ESGP} + e,$$

where β is constant; PURDEC is purchase decision; ESGP is ESG practices awareness.

The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.873$) in Table 3 shows a substantial beneficial connection across green purchase decisions and awareness of ESG practices. This suggests that as ESG practices improve, there is a significant increase in green purchase decision. Additionally, the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.762$) reveals that 76.2% of the variation in green purchase decision is explained by ESG practices. This implies that ESG practices are a major contributing factor to changes in green purchase decision, while the remaining 23.8% may be attributed to additional elements not covered by the model. By taking possible overfitting into consideration, the adjusted R -squared (0.761) offers a more accurate assessment of the model's explanatory power. The model's robustness and ability in clarifying the connection between ESG practices and celebrity endorsement are confirmed by its proximity to the R^2 value.

The general relevance of the statistical model used for regression can be inferred from the ANOVA results. The F -statistics ($F = 1220.369$) indicates how well ESG practices explain variations in the purchase decision. A higher F -value suggests a stronger explanatory power of the model. The regression model's statistical importance at the 0.05 level is confirmed by the significance value ($\text{Sig.} = 0.000$). This indicates that the likelihood that the association across awareness of ESG practices as well as purchase decisions is the result of chance is extremely minimal.

The beta coefficient presented in Table 3 ($\beta = 3.705$) demonstrates that an increase of one unit in ESG practices corresponds to a 3.705-unit increase in purchase decision, assuming all other variables remain unchanged. This suggests that the decision to make purchases and ESG

practices are significantly positively correlated. The computed value of the beta coefficient has a high degree of precision and dependability, as evidenced by the noticeably small standard error ($SE = 0.106$). A lower SE value indicates that there is no discernible variability in the data that affects the observed relationship. A statistically significant correlation across ESG practices and purchase decisions is indicated by the significance value ($\text{Sig.} = 0.000$), which is below the 0.05 cut-off. The null hypothesis (H_0), according to which ESG practices have no discernible impact on purchase decisions, is rejected due to the small p -value. Awareness of company's ESG practices has a big influence on consumers' choices about environmentally friendly buying.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant impact of celebrity endorsement on purchase decision. The model for the second hypothesis is stated as follows:

$$\text{PURDEC} = f(\text{CELEB}), \text{PURDEC} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{CELEB} + e,$$

where β is constant; PURDEC is purchase decision; CELEB is celebrity endorsement.

According to Table 4, the correlation coefficient ($R = .743$) indicates a strong positive relationship between celebrity endorsement and purchase decision. This suggests that as celebrity endorsement increases, purchase decision also tends to improve. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.551$) reveals that 55.1% of the variance in green purchase decision is explained by celebrity endorsement. This suggests that while celebrity endorsement significantly influences purchase decision, other factors contribute to the remaining 44.9% of the variation. A more precise figure of the explanatory power is provided by the adjusted R -squared (0.550), which takes

Table 3 – Influence of awareness of ESG practices on purchase decision
Таблица 3 – Влияние осведомленности о ESG-практиках на решение о покупке

Model Summary					
Indicator			Value		
R			.873 ^a		
R-Squared			.762		
Adjusted R-Squared			.761		
Std. Error of the Estimate			2.10700		
ANOVA					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	5417.782	1	5417.782	1220.369	.000 ^b
Residual	1695.874	382	4.439	–	–
Total	7113.656	383	–	–	–
Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	β	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.762	.396	–	12.025	.000
ESGP Awareness	3.705	.106	.873	34.934	.000

Note: ^a Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision; ^b Predictors: (Constant), ESG Practices.

Source: authors' computation using SPSS.

Table 4 – Influence of celebrity endorsement on purchase decision
Таблица 4 – Влияние одобрения знаменитостью на решение о покупке

Model Summary					
Indicator			Value		
R			.743 ^a		
R-Squared			.551		
Adjusted R-Squared			.550		
Std. Error of the Estimate			2.89003		
ANOVA					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3923.093	1	3923.093	469.704	.000 ^b
Residual	3190.563	382	8.352	–	–
Total	7113.656	383	–	–	–
Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	β	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.572	.640	–	7.138	.000
Celebrity Endorsement	.727	.034	.743	21.673	.000

Note: ^a Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision; ^b Predictors: (Constant), Celebrity Endorsement.

Source: authors' computation using SPSS.

into consideration the number of indicators in the model. Since it is very close to R^2 , it confirms that the model is stable and does not suffer from overfitting.

The F -statistics, calculated at 469.704, acts as a gauge for the regression model's general value. The presence of a high F -value indicates that the independent variable, celebrity endorsement, demonstrates significant explanatory power in forecasting purchase decision. The significance value (Sig. = 0.000) falls below the 0.05 threshold, demonstrating that the regression model exhibits statistical significance. This indicates that the association between celebrity endorsement and purchase decision is not attributable to random chance, and that celebrity endorsement exerts a significant influence on purchase decision. The beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.727$) shows that a one-unit increase in celebrity endorsement results in a 0.727-unit increase in purchase decision, assuming other factors remain constant. Celebrity endorsement positively influences consumers' purchase decisions. The standard error ($SE = 0.034$) is low, suggesting that the estimated beta coefficient is precise and reliable. A smaller standard error indicates reduced variability in the coefficient estimate, thereby enhancing confidence in the association between celebrity endorsement and purchase decision. The significance value (Sig. = 0.000) is below the 0.05 threshold, indicating a statistically significant relationship between celebrity endorsement and purchase decision. The low p -value indicates that we reject the null hypothesis (H_0), which posits that celebrity endorsement does not significantly impact purchase decision. This finding supports the notion that celebrity endorsement significantly influences consumers' green purchasing behaviour.

Hypothesis 3: There is no mediating influence of celebrity endorsement on the relationship between awareness of ESG practices and purchase decision.

Table 5 shows the direct effect of customer's awareness of ESG practices on celebrity endorsement to determine the beta coefficient and standard error for Path A. The beta coefficient ($\beta = 2.392$) demonstrates that an increase of one unit in ESG practices results in a corresponding increase of 2.392 units in celebrity endorsement, assuming all other variables remain unchanged. This indicates a significant positive correlation between ESG practices and celebrity endorsement. The standard error ($SE = 0.185$) indicates the degree of variability associated with the estimate of the beta coefficient. A smaller standard error signifies a more accurate estimate. The low standard error indicates that the coefficient estimate demonstrates stability and reliability. Table 5 also shows the direct effect of ESG practices, celebrity endorsement on purchase decision to determine the beta coefficient and standard error for Path B and Path C. Furthermore, the analysis reveals that in the place of all other factors remaining constant, the beta coefficient for ESG practices ($\beta = 2.826$) suggests that a one-unit increase in ESG practices leads to a 2.826-unit increase in purchase decision. This indicates a significant positive impact of ESG practices on purchase decisions. When accounting for ESG practices, the beta coefficient for celebrity endorsement ($\beta = 0.368$) suggests that a one-unit increase in celebrity endorsement results in a 0.368-unit increase in purchase decision. This indicates a moderately positive influence of celebrity endorsement on the decision-making process related to green purchases. The standard error for ESG practices is notably low ($SE = 0.098$), indicating a highly precise

Table 5 – Mediating influence of celebrity endorsement on ESG-oriented purchase decision
Таблица 5 – Опосредующее влияние одобрения знаменитостями на решение о ESG-ориентированной покупке

Model	Coefficients ^a			T	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	β	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	9.974	.691	–	14.440	.000
ESG Practices	2.392	.185	.552	12.932	.000

Model	Coefficients ^{b,c}			T	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	β	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.096	.378	–	2.896	.004
ESG Practices	2.826	.098	.666	28.916	.000
Celebrity Endorsement	.368	.023	.375	16.307	.000

Note: Path A = 2.392 (0.185), Path B = 0.368 (0.023), Path C = 2.826 (0.098). ^a Dependent Variable: Celebrity Endorsement; ^b Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision; ^c Predictors: (Constant), ESG Practices, Celebrity Endorsement.

Source: authors' computation using SPSS.

estimation of its impact on purchase decision. The standard error for celebrity endorsement ($SE = 0.023$) is notably small, indicating a reliable and stable assessment of its effect.

The mediating influence. Figure 2 illustrates the various path required to determine the mediating influence. Celebrity endorsement has a mediating effect on the connection across awareness of ESG practices as well as purchase decisions, according to the Sobel result¹. The Sobel test's p -value of $0.00031083 < 0.05$ indicates that the null hypothesis is supported, and the alternative hypothesis – that celebrity endorsements have a mediating effect on the connection across ESG practices along with purchase decisions – is accepted. According to the Sobel test, the estimate of the indirect connection among awareness of ESG practices alongside purchase decisions through celebrity endorsement factors is 0.880256 (88%), with a p -value of 0.00031083.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Customer awareness of an organisation's ESG practices has a significant positive influence on purchase behaviour. Also, celebrity endorsement has a significant relationship with purchase decisions. It further concluded that celebrity endorsement mediates the relationship between awareness of ESG practices and purchase decision in the fast-moving

consumer good industry. This shows that most respondents are aware of ESG issues and prioritize ESG practices in making purchase decisions. Furthermore, it reflects that celebrities are opinion leaders, and their appeals can influence buyer's decisions. Organisations should therefore maximize the combination of ESG and celebrity endorsement for their success. The results of this study correlate with the findings of previous research like Kamel [2020] on the influence of celebrities in advertising message effectiveness while illustrating further the mediating influence of celebrity endorsement of ESG practices in promoting green purchase decisions of Gen Z and Millennials.

Managerial implications. The findings of this study provide several key managerial implications for organizations seeking to enhance their market position and influence consumer behaviour positively, particularly among Millennials and Generation Z.

1. *Prioritize ESG practices.* Organizations should prioritize the integration of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) practices into their core business strategies. By transparently communicating their commitment to sustainability, companies can build trust and loyalty among environmentally conscious consumers, ultimately leading to increased sales, goodwill, and market share.

2. *Engage credible endorsers.* It is essential for organizations to collaborate with credible, attractive, and popular celebrities, whose values align with their ESG message.

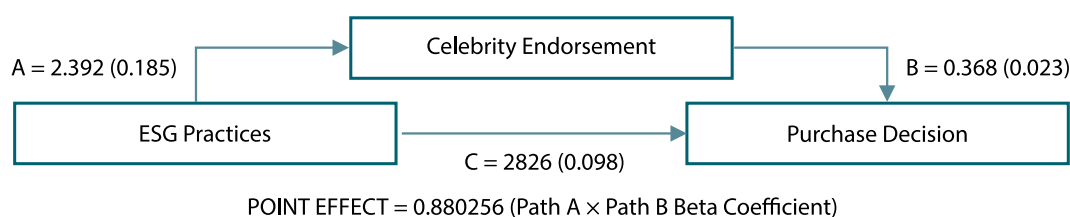


Fig. 2. Mediating influence path

Рис. 2. Результаты влияния медиации

The right celebrity endorsement can amplify the brand's message, create a stronger emotional connection with the target audience, and enhance the overall effectiveness of marketing campaigns.

3. *Enhance consumer awareness.* Organizations should actively participate in initiatives that raise consumer awareness of ESG practices. Collaborating with governments, celebrities, and social organizations can help demystify ESG concepts and highlight their importance, driving consumer engagement and support for sustainable products.

4. *Enforce regulatory compliance.* Companies must ensure strict adherence to ESG regulations and guidelines. By fostering a culture of compliance and accountability, organizations can demonstrate their commitment to sustainable operations, which can enhance their reputation and mitigate risks associated with non-compliance.

5. *Leverage celebrity influence.* The study underscores the significant role of celebrity endorsements in shaping consumer attitudes towards sustainable products. Managers should strategically leverage this influence to

promote their ESG initiatives, thereby encouraging green purchasing behaviour among their target demographics.

In summary, by focusing on these managerial implications, organizations can effectively harness the power of celebrity endorsements and ESG practices to drive consumer behaviour, enhance brand loyalty, and contribute to a more sustainable future.

This study has focused on the mediating effect of celebrity endorsement on the influence of ESG practices on purchase decisions among Gen Z and Millennials. The study suffers from some limitations in that it only focuses on younger generations, and a narrow industrial and geographical sample. These limitations can affect the generalization of the findings. Further research could be done to examine the awareness of older generations on ESG practices awareness and bigger geographical scope, and whether it affects their purchase decisions. Also, to investigate their response towards celebrity endorsements. The same study can also be replicated in or extended to other institutional and geographical contexts to aid generalization. ■

Appendix – The questionnaire to measure ESG practices awareness, celebrity endorsement, and purchase decision

Приложение – Анкета для оценки осведомленности о ESG-практиках, одобрения знаменитостями и решения о покупке

Constructs	Items
Environmental Pillar	I notice environmentally friendly certification labels on brand. I look out for information showing no environmental laws were breached in the production process. I prefer brands that consider the use of more environmentally friendly and safer raw materials, reduce water consumption, and improve energy efficiency. I love brands that focus on effective management of waste and recycling activities. I prefer brands that disclose corporate environmental information. I favour brands that strive to inform consumers of the importance of protecting the environment
Social Pillar	I am loyal to companies that respect culture, traditions, and social norms. I love companies that manage service quality and seek customer satisfaction. Quick customer social-related complaints and conflict resolutions are essential for customer loyalty. I favour brands that invest in education, i.e., giving scholarships
Governance Pillar	Companies that strictly adhere to state and local laws when conducting their business are my favourites. I believe that ethical standards policy should take precedence over financial performance. I perceive that companies that disclose corporate information (e.g., ESG/sustainability reports, income, taxes and expenses, donations, and salaries) are the best. I favour brands that do not attempt to deceive consumers, make false advertising claims, or operate aggressive anti-corruption policies both internally and externally. Data protection, privacy, and security are important considerations for me in making buying decision
Celebrity Endorsement	Celebrity endorsements can increase my awareness of a brand's ESG initiatives. I am more likely to trust a brand's ESG claims if they are endorsed by a celebrity who are known for their expertise in ESG issues. I am more likely to engage in a brand if it is endorsed by a celebrity I admire. I trust endorsers who have a good fit with ESG initiatives. Celebrity endorsers who are perceived as credible are more effective at influencing my purchase decisions
Purchase Decision	I have been influenced by making purchase(s) due to the company's ESG practices. Celebrity endorsement influences my purchase decision. ESG performance is an important factor in my purchase decisions. A combination of ESG and celebrity endorsement can affect my purchase decision

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