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Green Claims or Genuine Commitment? Perceived Brand Authenticity, Greenwashing Scepticism, and Purchase Intention in Digital Organic Food Markets

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ABSTRACT

The growing popularity of organic food products and the widespread adoption of digital marketing have heightened consumer awareness regarding sustainability claims and brand authenticity. However, the uncontrolled proliferation of environmental assertions across digital platforms has generated widespread scepticism concerning the genuine nature of brands' sustainability commitments and the prevalence of greenwashing. This conceptual paper investigates the structural relationships among perceived brand authenticity, greenwashing scepticism, and consumer purchase intention within organic food brands marketed through digital ecosystems. Synthesizing literature across green marketing, brand management, consumer trust, and sustainable consumer behaviour, the paper examines how consumers evaluate digital sustainability claims and distinguish authentic environmental responsibility from deceptive communication strategies. It systematically analyses core operational drivers—specifically organizational transparency, messaging credibility, brand consistency, and stakeholder value alignment—in shaping digital brand authenticity. Furthermore, the study positions greenwashing scepticism as a critical cognitive mechanism that moderates consumer evaluations and subsequent purchase decisions in online environments. Ultimately, this conceptual framework provides actionable insights for digital brand managers and establishes meaningful theoretical pathways for future empirical research in sustainable consumption and digital marketing.

Keywords: Perceived brand authenticity; Greenwashing scepticism; Consumer purchase intention; Organic food brands; Digital Marketing

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Context

The global organic food market has experienced unprecedented growth over the past two decades, driven by increasing consumer consciousness regarding health, environmental sustainability, and ethical consumption (Statista, 2024; Grand View Research, 2023). Simultaneously, the digital transformation of marketing ecosystems has fundamentally altered how brands communicate their sustainability credentials to consumers. Social media platforms, e-commerce websites, influencer marketing channels, and brand-owned digital

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properties now serve as primary arenas where organic food brands articulate their environmental commitments (Kumar & Christodoulopoulou, 2020).

However, this digital proliferation of environmental claims has created a paradoxical marketplace environment. While consumers increasingly seek authentic, environmentally responsible brands, the ease and low cost of making digital sustainability assertions have led to a saturation of green messaging—much of which lacks substantive backing (de Freitas Netto et al., 2020). This phenomenon, widely recognized as "greenwashing," has eroded consumer trust and generated pervasive scepticism regarding the genuineness of corporate environmental commitments (Parguel et al., 2011; Nyilasy et al., 2014).

1.2 Problem Statement

The digital organic food market presents a unique challenge: consumers must evaluate authenticity claims in information-rich yet credibility-poor environments. Unlike physical retail settings where product attributes can be directly assessed, digital platforms rely heavily on textual, visual, and narrative cues to convey brand authenticity (Moulins & Roux, 2022). This information asymmetry creates fertile ground for both genuine brands to be perceived with suspicion and deceptive brands to exploit consumer goodwill.

Despite growing academic interest in green marketing and consumer behaviour, there remains a significant theoretical gap in understanding how perceived brand authenticity, greenwashing scepticism, and purchase intention interact specifically within digital organic food markets. Existing literature has largely examined these constructs in isolation or within traditional marketing contexts, leaving the digital ecosystem's unique dynamics underexplored.

1.3 Research Objectives

This conceptual paper aims to:

1. Synthesize and integrate extant literature on perceived brand authenticity, greenwashing scepticism, and consumer purchase intention within digital marketing contexts.

2. Develop a comprehensive conceptual framework that elucidates the structural relationships among these constructs in the organic food sector.

3. Identify core operational drivers of digital brand authenticity, including organizational transparency, messaging credibility, brand consistency, and stakeholder value alignment.

4. Position greenwashing scepticism as a critical moderating cognitive mechanism in consumer evaluation processes.

5. Provide actionable insights for digital brand managers and establish theoretical pathways for future empirical research.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This paper contributes to the academic discourse in three significant ways. First, it bridges the fragmented literature across green marketing, brand management, consumer trust, and sustainable consumer behaviour by proposing an integrated conceptual model. Second, it addresses the contextual specificity of digital organic food markets, where trust signals are mediated through technology rather than physical interaction. Third, it

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offers practical implications for brand strategists navigating the complex terrain of digital sustainability communication.

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Perceived Brand Authenticity: Conceptualization and Dimensions

Brand authenticity has emerged as a pivotal construct in contemporary marketing scholarship, particularly in contexts where trust and credibility are paramount (Morhart et al., 2015; Napoli et al., 2014). Perceived brand authenticity (PBA) is defined as the extent to which consumers perceive a brand to be genuine, credible, and true to its stated values and commitments (Bruhn et al., 2012). In the organic food context, PBA encompasses the consumer's assessment of whether a brand's sustainability claims reflect genuine organizational practices rather than superficial marketing rhetoric.

Morhart et al. (2015) proposed a multidimensional model of brand authenticity comprising four dimensions: continuity (temporal consistency), credibility (truthfulness of claims), integrity (adherence to moral principles), and symbolism (meaning-making capacity). Extending this framework to digital contexts, Moulins and Roux (2022) argue that digital brand authenticity is additionally shaped by interactive transparency, user-generated content validation, and algorithmic visibility.

In the organic food sector specifically, authenticity perceptions are influenced by certification credibility, supply chain transparency, farmer narratives, and alignment between stated values and observable practices (Nuttavuthisit & Thøgersen, 2017). Digital platforms amplify these cues while simultaneously introducing new challenges of verification and information overload.

2.2 Greenwashing Scepticism: A Cognitive Evaluation Mechanism

Greenwashing scepticism refers to the consumer's tendency to doubt, question, or disbelieve corporate environmental claims based on perceived inconsistencies, exaggerations, or deceptiveness (Parguel et al., 2011; Nyilasy et al., 2014). Rooted in attribution theory (Kelley, 1973) and persuasion knowledge model (Friestad & Wright, 1994), greenwashing scepticism represents a cognitive defence mechanism activated when consumers perceive incongruence between a brand's environmental messaging and its actual practices or industry norms.

De Freitas Netto et al. (2020) categorize greenwashing into seven manifestations—the "seven sins of greenwashing"—including hidden trade-offs, lack of proof, vagueness, false labels, irrelevance, lesser of two evils, and outright falsehood. In digital environments, these manifestations are amplified through manipulated imagery, selective data presentation, influencer endorsements lacking substantive basis, and algorithmic amplification of misleading content (Carlson et al., 2023).

Greenwashing scepticism operates as both an antecedent to purchase behaviour (negatively influencing intention) and a moderator of the relationship between brand communications and consumer responses (Gosselt et al., 2019). Consumers with high greenwashing scepticism engage in more elaborate processing of environmental claims, requiring greater evidential support before forming positive brand evaluations.

2.3 Consumer Purchase Intention in Digital Organic Food Markets

Purchase intention, defined as the probability that a consumer will engage in a buying behaviour for a specific product or service (Ajzen, 1991), represents the ultimate behavioural outcome in the proposed framework.

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Within digital organic food markets, purchase intention is influenced by a constellation of factors including perceived product quality, price-value assessment, health consciousness, environmental concern, and crucially, trust in the brand's sustainability credentials (Yadav & Pathak, 2016; Paul et al., 2016).

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) provides a foundational lens, suggesting that purchase intention is shaped by attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. In digital contexts, these determinants are mediated by platform trust, digital experience quality, social proof mechanisms (reviews, ratings, influencer endorsements), and perceived risk reduction strategies (secure payment, return policies, certification verification) (Ponte et al., 2015).

2.4 Digital Marketing Ecosystems and Sustainability Communication

The digital marketing ecosystem for organic food brands encompasses multiple touchpoints including brand websites, social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok), e-commerce marketplaces (Amazon, BigBasket, Nature's Basket), mobile applications, email marketing, search engine marketing, and influencer/partner networks (Kumar & Christodoulopoulou, 2020). Each touchpoint presents distinct opportunities and challenges for communicating sustainability authentically.

Social media, in particular, has become a double-edged sword for organic food brands. While it enables direct consumer engagement, storytelling, and community building, it also exposes brands to heightened scrutiny, viral criticism, and comparative evaluation against competitors' claims (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The participatory nature of digital platforms means that brand authenticity is no longer solely controlled by the organization but is co-constructed through consumer interactions, reviews, and user-generated content (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001).

2.5 Synthesis and Research Gap

The existing literature reveals several critical gaps that this paper addresses:

1. Contextual Gap: Limited research specifically examines the intersection of brand authenticity, greenwashing scepticism, and purchase intention within digital organic food markets.

2. Integration Gap: These constructs are typically studied in isolation rather than as an interconnected system.

3. Digital Specificity Gap: The unique dynamics of digital environments—algorithmic curation, information asymmetry, social proof mechanisms—are insufficiently incorporated into existing models.

4. Moderation Gap: The role of greenwashing scepticism as a moderating mechanism in the authenticity-intention relationship remains underexplored.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Overview of the Proposed Model

The conceptual framework proposed in this paper integrates three primary constructs—Perceived Brand Authenticity (PBA), Greenwashing Scepticism (GWS), and Consumer Purchase Intention (CPI)—within the specific context of digital organic food marketing. The framework is grounded in Signalling Theory (Spence, 1973), Attribution Theory (Kelley, 1973), the Persuasion Knowledge Model (Friestad & Wright, 1994), and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Figure 1 illustrates the proposed conceptual framework. The four operational drivers: organizational transparency, messaging credibility, brand consistency, and

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stakeholder value alignment positively shape perceived brand authenticity (PBA) in digital environments. PBA, in turn, exerts a positive influence on consumer purchase intention (CPI) within digital organic food markets. Greenwashing scepticism (GWS) is positioned as a moderating cognitive mechanism that weakens the positive PBA–CPI relationship, reflecting consumers' defensive processing of sustainability claims in online ecosystems.

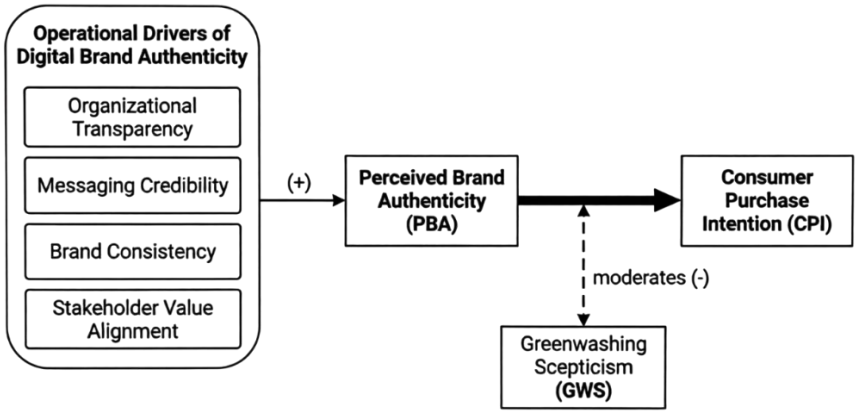


Figure 1. *Proposed Conceptual Framework*

Note. Solid arrows indicate direct positive effects; the dashed arrow indicates the negative moderating effect of greenwashing scepticism (GWS) on the PBA → CPI relationship.

3.2 Core Construct: Perceived Brand Authenticity (PBA)

Perceived Brand Authenticity in the digital organic food context is conceptualized as a higher-order construct comprising:

- Continuity: The brand's temporal consistency in sustainability messaging across digital platforms over time.
- Credibility: The perceived truthfulness and evidential backing of environmental claims made through digital channels.
- Integrity: The alignment between the brand's stated environmental values and its observable business practices.
- Symbolism: The brand's capacity to create meaningful narratives that resonate with consumers' environmental identities.

3.3 Moderating Construct: Greenwashing Scepticism (GWS)

Greenwashing Scepticism is operationalized as a multi-dimensional cognitive disposition encompassing:

- Claim Scepticism: Doubt regarding the truthfulness of specific environmental assertions.

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- Motive Scepticism: Suspicion regarding the underlying motivations behind sustainability communication.
- Execution Scepticism: Questioning whether stated commitments translate into actual practices.
- Source Scepticism: Distrust of the communication channel or messenger (e.g., influencers, advertisements).

3.4 Outcome Construct: Consumer Purchase Intention (CPI)

Consumer Purchase Intention in digital organic food markets is conceptualized through:

- Willingness to Purchase: The stated probability of buying the organic product.
- Willingness to Pay Premium: Acceptance of higher prices justified by sustainability credentials.
- Digital Engagement Intention: Likelihood of interacting with the brand across digital touchpoints.
- Word-of-Mouth Intention: Propensity to recommend the brand within digital networks.

3.5 Operational Drivers of Digital Brand Authenticity

3.5.1 Organizational Transparency (H4a)

Organizational transparency refers to the extent to which a brand openly discloses its supply chain processes, sourcing practices, environmental impact data, and operational decisions through digital channels (Rawlins, 2009). In the organic food context, this includes farm-to-table traceability, ingredient sourcing disclosures, carbon footprint reporting, and third-party certification visibility.

Proposition 1: Higher levels of organizational transparency in digital communications positively influence perceived brand authenticity of organic food brands.

3.5.2 Messaging Credibility (H4b)

Messaging credibility pertains to the perceived trustworthiness, accuracy, and evidential support of sustainability communications (Ohanian, 1990). In digital environments, credibility is enhanced through third-party certifications, scientific backing, transparent data presentation, and avoidance of superlative or vague environmental language.

Proposition 2: Higher messaging credibility in digital sustainability communications positively influences perceived brand authenticity of organic food brands.

3.5.3 Brand Consistency (H4c)

Brand consistency refers to the coherence and uniformity of sustainability messaging across all digital touchpoints and over time (Keller, 2013). Inconsistent messaging—where a brand's social media presence contradicts its website claims or where different platforms convey divergent sustainability narratives—erodes authenticity perceptions.

Proposition 3: Greater brand consistency across digital touchpoints positively influences perceived brand authenticity of organic food brands.

3.5.4 Stakeholder Value Alignment (H4d)

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Stakeholder value alignment captures the degree to which a brand's sustainability communications reflect genuine concern for all stakeholders—consumers, farmers, communities, and the environment—rather than purely profit-driven messaging (Freeman, 1984). Digital platforms enable consumers to assess whether brands engage in genuine stakeholder dialogue or merely performative communication.

Proposition 4: Higher perceived stakeholder value alignment in digital communications positively influences perceived brand authenticity of organic food brands.

3.6 Structural Relationships

3.6.1 PBA → CPI (H1)

Drawing on Signalling Theory, perceived brand authenticity serves as a quality signal that reduces consumer uncertainty in digital environments where physical product evaluation is impossible. Authentic brands reduce perceived risk, enhance trust, and create emotional connections that translate into purchase intention.

Proposition 5: Perceived brand authenticity positively influences consumer purchase intention in digital organic food markets.

3.6.2 GWS → CPI (H2)

Greenwashing scepticism activates consumer defence mechanisms, leading to more critical evaluation of brand claims, reduced trust, and lower purchase likelihood. Highly sceptical consumers require greater evidential support and are less responsive to standard sustainability messaging.

Proposition 6: Greenwashing scepticism negatively influences consumer purchase intention in digital organic food markets.

3.6.3 Moderating Role of GWS (H3)

Greenwashing scepticism is positioned as a moderating variable that weakens the positive relationship between PBA and CPI. Even when a brand is perceived as relatively authentic, high levels of scepticism introduce cognitive doubt that attenuates the translation of positive brand perceptions into purchase behaviour.

Proposition 7: Greenwashing scepticism moderates the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and consumer purchase intention such that higher scepticism weakens the positive effect.

4. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

4.1 Signalling Theory

Signalling Theory (Spence, 1973) provides the foundational logic for understanding how brands communicate quality and authenticity in information-asymmetric markets. In digital organic food markets, consumers cannot directly verify production practices, ingredient quality, or environmental impact. Brands must therefore send credible signals—certifications, transparent reporting, consistent messaging—to reduce information asymmetry. The theory explains why authenticity perceptions drive purchase intention: authentic signals reduce perceived risk and facilitate decision-making.

4.2 Attribution Theory

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Attribution Theory (Kelley, 1973) explains how consumers make causal inferences about brand motivations behind sustainability communications. When consumers attribute environmental claims to genuine organizational values (internal attribution), authenticity perceptions increase. Conversely, when claims are attributed to profit motives or competitive pressure (external attribution), greenwashing scepticism intensifies. This theoretical lens explains the moderating role of GWS in the framework.

4.3 Persuasion Knowledge Model

The Persuasion Knowledge Model (Friestad & Wright, 1994) posits that consumers develop knowledge about persuasion tactics over time and use this knowledge to cope with marketing attempts. In the context of digital green marketing, consumers develop "green persuasion knowledge"—an understanding of common greenwashing tactics, misleading imagery, and manipulative language. This knowledge activates scepticism and alters the processing of subsequent sustainability communications.

4.4 Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) provides the structural basis for understanding purchase intention as a function of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Within the proposed framework, PBA shapes attitudes toward the brand, digital social proof influences subjective norms, and platform usability/certification accessibility affects perceived behavioural control.

4.5 Cognitive Dissonance Theory

Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957) explains the psychological discomfort consumers experience when they encounter inconsistencies between a brand's environmental claims and observable evidence. This dissonance manifests as greenwashing scepticism and motivates consumers to seek additional information, discount claims, or avoid the brand entirely.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 The Authenticity-Scepticism Tension in Digital Markets

The proposed framework reveals a fundamental tension inherent in digital organic food marketing: the very channels that enable brands to communicate authenticity also expose them to heightened scrutiny and scepticism. Digital platforms create a "transparency paradox" where brands are expected to be more open, yet increased information availability also increases the potential for identifying inconsistencies (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990).

This tension is particularly acute in the organic food sector, where product claims (organic, pesticide-free, sustainably sourced) are difficult for consumers to independently verify in digital environments. The absence of physical inspection, sensory evaluation, and direct producer interaction means that trust must be established entirely through digital signals—certifications, reviews, brand narratives, and third-party endorsements.

5.2 The Moderating Role of Greenwashing Scepticism

Positioning GWS as a moderator rather than merely an antecedent provides a more nuanced understanding of consumer decision-making. The framework suggests that even genuinely authentic brands face purchase intention erosion in highly sceptical consumer segments. This has profound implications for digital marketing strategy: authenticity alone is insufficient if the consumer's cognitive framework is predisposed to doubt.

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The moderation effect suggests a "scepticism threshold" beyond which additional authenticity signals yield diminishing returns in influencing purchase intention. This threshold may vary based on consumer characteristics (environmental knowledge, prior greenwashing experiences, digital literacy) and product characteristics (price premium, category involvement, certification visibility).

5.3 Digital-Specific Dynamics

The framework incorporates several digital-specific dynamics that distinguish it from traditional marketing models:

- Algorithmic Amplification: Digital algorithms may disproportionately amplify sensational or controversial sustainability claims, creating skewed perceptions of industry-wide greenwashing.
- Social Proof Mechanisms: User reviews, ratings, and social media discussions serve as secondary authenticity validators that can either reinforce or undermine brand claims.
- Information Overload: The sheer volume of sustainability messaging in digital environments may lead to heuristic processing, where consumers rely on peripheral cues rather than systematic evaluation.
- Participatory Scrutiny: Digital platforms enable collective consumer investigation of brand claims, creating crowdsourced accountability mechanisms.

5.4 Implications for Organic Food Brands

The framework suggests that organic food brands operating in digital markets must adopt a multi-dimensional authenticity strategy:

1. Radical Transparency: Going beyond minimum disclosure requirements to proactively share supply chain information, environmental impact data, and even challenges/failures.

2. Evidential Communication: Supporting all sustainability claims with verifiable data, third-party certifications, and transparent methodologies.

3. Narrative Consistency: Ensuring unified sustainability messaging across all digital touchpoints—website, social media, email, e-commerce listings, and influencer partnerships.

4. Stakeholder Engagement: Demonstrating genuine concern for farmers, communities, and ecosystems through digital storytelling and participatory initiatives.

5. Scepticism Acknowledgement: Proactively addressing potential scepticism by acknowledging industry-wide greenwashing concerns and differentiating through verifiable practices.

6. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 For Digital Brand Managers

The conceptual framework offers several actionable insights for digital brand managers in the organic food sector:

- Authenticity Audits: Regular assessment of digital sustainability communications for consistency, accuracy, and evidential support across all platforms.
- Transparency Infrastructure: Investment in blockchain-based traceability, live farm feeds, QR-code linked supply chain information, and open-source sustainability reporting.

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- Scepticism-Responsive Communication: Designing messaging that anticipates and addresses consumer scepticism rather than ignoring it—acknowledging the prevalence of greenwashing while demonstrating genuine differentiation.
- Multi-Channel Consistency Protocols: Implementing governance structures to ensure sustainability messaging uniformity across owned, earned, and paid digital media.
- Community Building: Leveraging digital platforms to create communities of practice where consumers can engage directly with producers, verify claims, and co-create brand narratives.

6.2 For Digital Marketing Strategists

- Influencer Vetting: Ensuring that influencer partnerships align with genuine sustainability practices to avoid credibility erosion.
- Content Strategy: Developing long-form, evidence-based content (documentaries, behind-the-scenes content, sustainability reports) alongside short-form promotional content.
- User-Generated Content: Encouraging and amplifying authentic consumer experiences and testimonials as credibility signals.
- Crisis Preparedness: Developing protocols for responding to greenwashing allegations or authenticity challenges in digital spaces.

6.3 For Policy Makers and Industry Bodies

- Digital Green Claim Standards: Developing specific guidelines for sustainability communication in digital environments.
- Certification Visibility: Mandating prominent display of organic/sustainability certifications on e-commerce platforms.
- Greenwashing Regulation: Strengthening enforcement mechanisms against deceptive digital environmental claims.
- Consumer Education: Supporting digital literacy initiatives that help consumers evaluate sustainability claims critically.

7. THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

This conceptual paper makes several theoretical contributions to the existing literature:

1. Integrated Framework: It provides the first comprehensive conceptual model integrating PBA, GWS, and CPI specifically within digital organic food markets, addressing the fragmentation in existing literature.

2. Moderation Mechanism: By positioning GWS as a moderator rather than solely an antecedent, the paper offers a more nuanced understanding of how scepticism alters the authenticity-intention relationship.

3. Digital Contextualization: The framework incorporates digital-specific dynamics (algorithmic amplification, social proof, participatory scrutiny) that are absent from traditional marketing models.

4. Operational Driver Identification: The systematic identification of four operational drivers (transparency, messaging credibility, consistency, stakeholder alignment) provides a structured approach to understanding authenticity formation in digital contexts.

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5. Multi-Theoretical Integration: The synthesis of Signalling Theory, Attribution Theory, Persuasion Knowledge Model, TPB, and Cognitive Dissonance Theory provides a robust theoretical foundation for future empirical testing.

8. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

8.1 Limitations

As a conceptual paper, this study is subject to inherent limitations:

- The proposed relationships are theoretically derived and require empirical validation.
- The framework is context-specific to organic food brands in digital markets and may not generalize to other product categories or traditional marketing contexts.
- The model does not account for cultural variations in authenticity perceptions and scepticism levels.
- The cross-sectional nature of the proposed relationships does not capture temporal dynamics of trust building and scepticism evolution.

8.2 Future Research Directions

The conceptual framework opens multiple avenues for future empirical research:

1. Quantitative Validation: Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) studies to test the proposed hypotheses across diverse consumer samples.

2. Cross-Cultural Studies: Examining how cultural dimensions (individualism-collectivism, uncertainty avoidance) moderate the proposed relationships.

3. Longitudinal Studies: Tracking how authenticity perceptions and scepticism evolve over repeated digital interactions.

4. Experimental Designs: Manipulating transparency levels, messaging credibility, and consistency to observe causal effects on PBA and CPI.

5. Platform-Specific Studies: Examining whether the framework operates differently across social media, e-commerce, and brand-owned digital channels.

6. Consumer Segmentation: Identifying distinct consumer segments based on scepticism levels and developing targeted communication strategies.

7. AI and Algorithmic Influence: Investigating how AI-curated content and recommendation algorithms affect authenticity perceptions and scepticism.

8. Post-Purchase Behaviour: Extending the framework to include post-purchase satisfaction, repurchase intention, and brand advocacy.

9. CONCLUSION

This conceptual paper addresses the critical intersection of perceived brand authenticity, greenwashing scepticism, and consumer purchase intention within the rapidly evolving digital organic food market. By synthesizing literature across green marketing, brand management, consumer trust, and sustainable consumer behaviour, the paper develops an integrated conceptual framework that captures the complex dynamics of

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consumer evaluation in digital sustainability contexts. The framework reveals that digital brand authenticity is not a static attribute but a dynamic perception shaped by organizational transparency, messaging credibility, brand consistency, and stakeholder value alignment. Furthermore, greenwashing scepticism operates as a critical cognitive filter that moderates the translation of authenticity perceptions into purchase behaviour, suggesting that even genuinely authentic brands must actively manage consumer scepticism in digital environments. The implications are clear: in an era of digital information abundance and greenwashing proliferation, organic food brands must move beyond superficial sustainability messaging toward radical transparency, evidential communication, and genuine stakeholder engagement. The digital ecosystem, while presenting challenges of scrutiny and scepticism, simultaneously offers unprecedented opportunities for authentic brands to build deep, trust-based relationships with environmentally conscious consumers. This conceptual framework provides both a theoretical foundation for future empirical research and a practical roadmap for digital brand managers navigating the complex terrain of sustainable marketing in the digital age. As the organic food market continues to grow and digital channels become increasingly central to consumer decision-making, understanding and managing the authenticity-scepticism dynamic will be paramount for brands seeking to convert green claims into genuine, lasting consumer commitment.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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