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GREEN LABELING AND ACTUAL BUYING BEHAVIOR OF ORGANIC CHICKEN: THE ROLE OF TRUST IN ORGANIC CERTIFICATION AND EPISTEMIC VALUE

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Abstract

This study examines the formation of actual buying behavior among Organic chicken consumers by focusing on the informational and trust mechanisms associated with green labeling and consumer knowledge. The study develops a focused structural model in which Green Labeling and Epistemic Value predict Trust in Organic Certification and Actual Buying Behavior. The model is motivated by the distinctive characteristics of Organic chicken as a premium and credence-oriented food product: consumers can observe attributes such as appearance and freshness, but claims concerning production practices, environmental responsibility, and organic certification require external information and institutional assurance. Data were obtained from 300 respondents who reported experience purchasing Organic chicken. The analysis uses covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) with Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) following the analytical framework and regression output of the underlying study. Green Labeling has a positive and significant effect on Trust in Organic Certification (unstandardized estimate = 0.455; C.R. = 6.223; $p < 0.001$), while Epistemic Value also has a positive and significant effect on trust (estimate = 0.177; C.R. = 3.510; $p < 0.001$). Trust in Organic Certification positively affects Actual Buying Behavior (estimate = 0.308; C.R. = 5.761; $p < 0.001$). Epistemic Value has a strong positive direct effect on Actual Buying Behavior (standardized $\beta = 0.379$; C.R. = 5.864; $p < 0.001$). In contrast, Green Labeling does not have a significant direct standardized effect on Actual Buying Behavior ($\beta = 0.097$; $p = 0.145$), although the supplied unstandardized regression-weight output reports $p = 0.007$; the discrepancy is transparently discussed. The indirect effect of Green Labeling through Trust (0.129) exceeds its direct standardized effect (0.097), while Epistemic Value has a dominant direct effect (0.379) supplemented by an indirect effect through trust (0.067). The findings indicate that labeling becomes behaviorally meaningful when it creates credible trust and that consumer knowledge is a central driver of actual purchasing behavior.

Keywords: Organic Chicken; Green Labeling; Epistemic Value; Trust In Organic Certification; Actual Buying Behavior; Consumer Behavior; Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

The market for Organic chicken in Indonesia occupies a distinctive position between conventional poultry and premium food categories. Organic chicken is commonly associated with distinctive taste, firmer texture, perceived nutritional value, and traditional food practices. Recent Indonesian research confirms that consumers often perceive Organic chicken as a premium-quality product because of its flavor, texture, and perceived health benefits (Ottu, 2025).

At the same time, studies of Organic chicken purchasing have traditionally concentrated on demographic factors, physical attributes, price, availability, and purchasing circumstances rather than on the information and trust mechanisms behind the purchase.

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This orientation is important because consumers increasingly encounter food products through labels and claims that communicate attributes they cannot directly verify. A green label can signal environmentally responsible production, while an organic certification claim can signal compliance with production standards. For Organic chicken, such information may be especially relevant when producers seek to differentiate products from ordinary chicken through claims concerning feed, production methods, animal welfare, environmental practices, or absence of certain inputs. The consumer therefore faces an information problem: the physical chicken may look similar to another product, while the claimed production process is largely invisible.

Research on organic chicken demonstrates that certification information can have substantial economic value. Van Loo et al. (2011) found that consumers were willing to pay a premium for organic chicken and valued a USDA-certified organic label more highly than a generic organic label. Similarly, Ifft, Roland-Holst, and Zilberman (2012) found that consumers in Hanoi were willing to pay a premium for safety-labeled free-range chicken. These findings show that labels can affect consumer valuation, but they do not fully explain how a label is translated into actual purchasing behavior.

A critical mechanism is trust. Eco-labels and certification marks are informational cues intended to reduce information asymmetry. Gorton et al. (2021) demonstrated that trust in eco-labels positively affects label use and that knowledge of third-party certification strengthens trust. Their finding is particularly relevant to Organic chicken because certification claims are credence attributes: consumers cannot independently verify production practices merely by examining the finished product.

A second mechanism is epistemic value. Consumers may buy a food product partly because the product satisfies curiosity, provides knowledge, or allows them to learn about production practices. Sheth, Newman, and Gross (1991) conceptualized epistemic value as one of the consumption values that can influence choice. In organic food research, Kushwah, Dhir, and Sagar (2019) found that epistemic value was a particularly important predictor of ethical consumption intention and choice behavior. Rūtelionė and Bhutto (2024) similarly found that epistemic value positively influenced purchase intention for organic food.

The relevance of knowledge is reinforced by research on trust and organic food. Truong, Lang, and Conroy (2021) found that trust and distrust in the food system influence organic food choice and that the importance of consumption values differs across regular, occasional, and non-buyers. This indicates that purchasing behavior is not simply a function of favorable attitudes; consumers need sufficient confidence in the product system and the information supporting it.

Indonesian research on Organic chicken has generally examined consumer preference and purchase decision from a product-attribute or demographic perspective. Edwin et al. (2023), for example, examined personal factors and purchasing decisions for Organic chicken in Padang. Putri et al. (2022) examined purchasing decisions for KUB chicken in Bali in the context of customary and religious needs. More recent work by Nabilasari, Harmini, and

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Muflikh (2025) examined organic broiler chicken in Jabodetabek and found that consumers preferred products with organic labels, freshness, taste, and convenient product forms. These studies establish that labeling and product attributes matter, but a focused model linking green labeling, epistemic value, certification trust, and actual buying behavior of Organic chicken remains limited.

Accordingly, this article addresses a research gap at the intersection of three streams of literature. The first stream studies Organic chicken preferences but rarely incorporates sustainability information and certification trust. The second examines organic or green food labeling but often uses purchase intention or willingness to pay rather than actual buying behavior.

The third examines consumption values and trust but has rarely been applied to Organic chicken in Indonesia. The present study integrates these streams through a focused structural model.

The purpose of this study is therefore to analyze whether Green Labeling and Epistemic Value influence Trust in Organic Certification and Actual Buying Behavior among Organic chicken consumers.

The article specifically examines five structural relationships: Green Labeling to Trust in Organic Certification; Epistemic Value to Trust in Organic Certification; Trust in Organic Certification to Actual Buying Behavior; Green Labeling to Actual Buying Behavior; and Epistemic Value to Actual Buying Behavior.

The study also compares the direct and indirect effects to identify whether trust functions as a more important route than direct labeling.

The study contributes in three ways. First, it moves the discussion of Organic chicken consumption beyond conventional attributes toward informational and institutional dimensions. Second, it distinguishes a label's capacity to build trust from its ability to generate direct purchase behavior.

Third, it emphasizes epistemic value as a potentially important driver of actual behavior, extending consumption-value research into a specific Indonesian livestock-food context.

Research Gap and State of the Art

The research gap is not defined merely by the absence of a particular variable. It is defined by the combination of object, mechanism, and behavioral outcome. Existing research provides evidence that labels can affect valuation and that trust matters for organic food, while studies of Organic chicken primarily explain consumer preferences through observable product attributes.

The present study connects these literatures by testing an information–trust–behavior mechanism in the context of Organic chicken.

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Table 1: Research Gap and Positioning of the Present Study

Study	Object/context	Main focus	Key finding	Remaining gap
Van Loo et al. (2011)	Organic chicken breast	Organic label; certified organic label; WTP	Certified organic label received substantially higher valuation than a generic organic label.	Focuses on WTP and choice experiment; does not model trust as a mediator of actual behavior.
Ifft et al. (2012)	Free-range chicken, Hanoi	Safety labeling; WTP	Safety labeling generated a measurable premium; education increased valuation.	Does not examine epistemic value or certification trust as a behavioral mechanism.
Gorton et al. (2021)	Organic eco-labels, Europe	Institutional trust; eco-label trust; certification knowledge	Third-party certification knowledge increases label trust and label use.	Not focused on Organic chicken or Indonesian consumers; behavioral outcome is label use rather than actual purchase.
Kushwah et al. (2019)	Organic food	Consumption values; ethical choice behavior	Epistemic value was a major predictor of intention and choice behavior.	Does not integrate green labeling and certification trust in a Organic-chicken setting.
Truong et al. (2021)	Organic food, Vietnam	Trust; consumption values; actual food choice	Trust/distrust in the food system influences organic food choice.	Qualitative design and broader food-system trust; not a quantitative structural model of labeling and certification trust.
Rūtelionė & Bhutto (2024)	Organic food, Lithuania	Consumption values; purchase intention	Epistemic value positively affects purchase intention.	Outcome is intention rather than actual buying behavior.
Edwin et al. (2023)	Organic chicken, Padang	Personal consumer factors; purchase decision	Personal factors are associated with Organic chicken purchase decisions.	Does not examine green labeling, epistemic value, or certification trust.
Nabilasari et al. (2025)	Organic broiler chicken, Jabodetabek	Organic label; freshness; taste; price; WTP	Organic label is preferred and receives positive WTP; price reduces utility.	Broiler rather than Organic chicken; DCE/WTP rather than a trust-mediated actual-behavior model.
Ottu (2025)	Organic vs. broiler chicken, Kupang	Consumer preference; sensory and health attributes	Organic chicken is preferred for flavor, texture, and perceived health value.	Does not examine sustainability information or certification trust.

Source: Literatures Reviewed (2026)

The state of the art therefore points toward a more complete explanation: observable attributes explain why Organic chicken is attractive, but informational attributes may explain why a consumer trusts a premium claim and converts that confidence into actual buying behavior. This article positions Green Labeling as the external signal, Epistemic Value as the consumer's knowledge-oriented value, Trust in Organic Certification as the internal assurance mechanism, and Actual Buying Behavior as the observable market response.

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LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Stimulus Organism Response Perspective

Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) theory proposes that an external stimulus is interpreted internally before producing a behavioral response (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). In food markets, labels, packaging information, certification marks, and other cues can function as stimuli. The organismic component represents the consumer's internal state, such as trust, perceived risk, or evaluation. The response is the resulting behavior. The framework is appropriate for the present study because a green label is external and visible, whereas trust in certification is an internal judgment that precedes the purchase. Within this logic, Green Labeling is not assumed to be equivalent to purchase behavior. A consumer may see a label and still question its credibility. The label becomes behaviorally relevant when it produces confidence that the underlying claim is supported. Trust in Organic Certification is therefore positioned as the organismic mechanism between the signal and the response.

Theory of Consumption Values and Epistemic Value

The Theory of Consumption Values explains consumer choice through multiple values, including functional, social, emotional, conditional, and epistemic value (Sheth et al., 1991). Epistemic value reflects the utility derived from curiosity, novelty, knowledge acquisition, and learning. In food consumption, epistemic value can arise when consumers seek information about origin, production, ingredients, safety, environmental practices, and certification.

The construct is especially relevant when the product contains credence attributes. Consumers cannot independently observe whether a product was produced according to organic standards. Information therefore becomes a form of value because it helps the consumer interpret the claim and reduce uncertainty. The stronger the consumer's desire to understand the product, the greater the likelihood that labeling and certification information will enter the purchase decision.

Signaling and Information Asymmetry

Signaling theory explains why credible market signals can reduce information asymmetry. A producer possesses more information about production practices than the consumer. Certification can transfer part of the verification task to an external institution, while a label makes the certification visible at the point of purchase. However, the signal only works when the consumer considers the source credible. Gorton et al. (2021) provide particularly relevant evidence: trust in an eco-label affects label use, while knowledge of third-party certification strengthens trust. Van Loo et al. (2011) similarly show that a specific certified organic label can command greater consumer valuation than a generic organic label. These findings suggest that label credibility is more important than visual greenness alone.

Green Labeling

Green Labeling in this study refers to the consumer's perception that the label communicates environmental or organic-related product information clearly, credibly, and understandably.

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The construct is measured through clarity of information, credibility of the issuing institution, ease of understanding, and confidence in the truthfulness of the label. This definition deliberately goes beyond label recognition. For Organic chicken, a green label can differentiate a product from conventional market offerings by communicating production practices that are not observable from the final product. It can therefore reduce search costs and provide a basis for trust. Nabilasari et al. (2025) found that consumers in Jabodetabek preferred organic broiler chicken carrying an organic label and were willing to pay a premium for it, providing recent Indonesian evidence that labeling has economic meaning in poultry markets.

Trust In Organic Certification

Trust in Organic Certification is the consumer's confidence that the certification institution and certification process reliably support the product's organic or environmentally responsible claim. It contains both credibility and assurance. Trust is particularly important for credence goods because consumers cannot verify the production process by inspection.

Truong et al. (2021) show that trust and distrust in the food system shape organic food choice, while Gorton et al. (2021) show that trust in eco-labels affects label use and is influenced by third-party certification knowledge. Together, these findings support the argument that certification trust is not a peripheral perception; it is a mechanism through which information can become behaviorally useful.

Actual Buying Behavior

Actual buying behavior refers to the actual manifestation of consumers' decisions to purchase and consume organic products. Unlike *purchase intention*, this variable measures consumers' actual purchasing behavior within a specific period. Studies by Baş et al. (2024) and Penalba-Sánchez et al. (2023) emphasize that consumer values and trust in organic labels have a strong influence on actual purchasing behavior. Therefore, actual buying behavior serves as an important indicator of the effectiveness of value- and trust-based organic branding strategies.

Actual buying behavior, or actual purchasing behavior, refers to the concrete actions taken by consumers to purchase, use, or consume a product or service after undergoing a process of evaluation and purchase intention formation. In consumer behavior research, actual buying behavior represents the final stage of the consumer decision-making process, reflecting the realization of an individual's preferences, attitudes, and intentions toward a product.

According to consumer behavior literature, actual buying behavior involves consumers' decisions regarding what to purchase, when to purchase, where to purchase, and how frequently to make purchases. Such behavior is influenced by various internal factors, including motivation, perception, attitudes, personal values, and emotions, as well as external factors such as culture, social groups, price, promotion, and the marketing environment. Therefore, *actual buying behavior* serves as an important indicator for evaluating the effectiveness of marketing strategies and the level of consumer acceptance of a product.

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Hypothesis Development

Green Labeling To Trust in Organic Certification

A green label can function as an institutional signal that a product satisfies an externally defined standard. When consumers perceive the label as clear and credible, uncertainty concerning the production claim is reduced. The effect should be stronger when the label identifies a recognizable certification institution and communicates information that can be verified. Gorton et al. (2021) found that knowledge of third-party certification increases trust in eco-labels, while Van Loo et al. (2011) showed that a certified organic label was valued more strongly than a generic organic label on chicken. Therefore, the label is expected to strengthen certification trust.

H1: Green Labeling has a positive and significant effect on Trust in Organic Certification.

Epistemic Value to Trust in Organic Certification

Consumers with high epistemic value actively seek knowledge and are more likely to examine production claims. Information about certification, farm practices, traceability, and safety can make the certification process understandable. This knowledge can strengthen confidence because trust becomes grounded in comprehension rather than passive acceptance. Gorton et al. (2021) explicitly identify knowledge of third-party certification as a positive antecedent of eco-label trust. The same logic is applicable to consumers evaluating Organic chicken with organic or green claims.

H2: Epistemic Value has a positive and significant effect on Trust in Organic Certification.

Trust in Organic Certification to Actual Buying Behavior

Trust is expected to reduce perceived uncertainty and purchase risk. For Organic chicken, consumers may already value taste and perceived health benefits, but claims about production practices remain difficult to verify. Certification trust can therefore provide the assurance required to move from favorable evaluation to transaction.

Truong et al. (2021) show that trust in the food system is related to organic food choice, and Gorton et al. (2021) show that eco-label trust influences label use. The present study extends this reasoning to actual buying behavior.

H3: Trust in Organic Certification has a positive and significant effect on Actual Buying Behavior.

Green Labeling to Actual Buying Behavior

A label may influence purchasing directly because it is visible at the point of choice and can simplify product comparison. However, direct effects should not be assumed. Consumers may notice a label but still hesitate because of price, availability, habit, or uncertainty about authenticity. Thus, the direct label-to-behavior path is an empirical question.

H4: Green Labeling has a positive and significant direct effect on Actual Buying Behavior.

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Epistemic Value to Actual Buying Behavior

Epistemic value can directly influence behavior because information itself reduces uncertainty and helps consumers justify a premium purchase. Kushwah et al. (2019) found epistemic value to be the strongest predictor of choice behavior in their organic-food study. Rūtelionė and Bhutto (2024) also found a positive effect on organic-food purchase intention. In the Organic chicken context, curiosity about production, feed, safety, certification, and environmental practices can become a direct source of purchase motivation.

H5: Epistemic Value has a positive and significant effect on Actual Buying Behavior.

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model combines the SOR mechanism with consumption-value logic. Green Labeling represents the external information cue, while Epistemic Value represents the consumer's internal motivation to learn. Trust in Organic Certification is positioned as the organismic assurance state, and Actual Buying Behavior is the behavioral response.

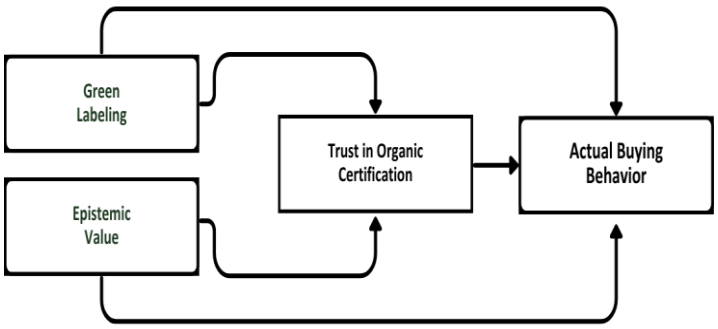

Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Source: Literatures Reviewed (2026)

METHOD

Research Design

The study uses an explanatory quantitative design. The objective is to explain the relationships among Green Labeling, Epistemic Value, Trust in Organic Certification, and Actual Buying Behavior. The empirical analysis is based on 300 respondents who were identified as consumers of Organic chicken. The structural relationships were estimated using covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) with Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE). The focal model is treated as a theoretically coherent sub model of a broader consumer-behavior framework. The decision to isolate the model is based on the empirical importance of trust and epistemic value in explaining actual buying behavior. The article therefore concentrates on the pathways that directly concern information, trust, and behavior rather than reproducing unrelated value-attitude paths.

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Population, Sample, and Sampling

The population comprises consumers who have experience purchasing Organic chicken. Purposive sampling was used because respondents needed to possess actual purchasing experience rather than merely general awareness of Organic chicken. A total of 300 usable responses were analyzed. The sample size is adequate for the parent CB-SEM framework and allows the study to examine latent constructs with multiple indicators. The data were collected through questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale for construct measures and behavioral questions for actual purchase experience. The respondent profile supplied for this article is reproduced below without altering the counts.

Measurement Instrument

The questionnaire consists of three parts: respondent identity and demographic characteristics; statements measuring the latent constructs using a five-point Likert scale; and questions validating actual purchasing behavior. The focal constructs were operationalized from the underlying research instrument.

Table 2: Operational Definition and Measurement of Focal Constructs

Construct	Definition	Indicators	Scale
Green Labeling	Perceived clarity, credibility, comprehensibility, and truthfulness of green/organic product labeling.	Clarity of label information; credibility of issuing institution; ease of understanding; confidence in label truthfulness.	Likert 1–5
Epistemic Value	Utility obtained from learning, curiosity, and acquiring new information about the product and its production.	Curiosity about source; interest in production system; search for certification information; satisfaction after learning production process.	Likert 1–5
Trust in Organic Certification	Confidence in the authenticity, credibility, and assurance provided by the certification system.	Confidence in certifier; certification assures quality; certified product is more trustworthy; psychological security in purchase.	Likert 1–5
Actual Buying Behavior	Observed purchasing activity of the focal Organic chicken product.	Purchase frequency; purchase proportion; repurchase consistency; average expenditure.	Behavioral scale

Source: Literatures Reviewed (2026)

Data Analysis Procedure

The analytical procedure consisted of four stages. First, descriptive analysis was used to profile respondents. Second, confirmatory factor analysis was used to evaluate the measurement model. Third, reliability and convergent validity were assessed using Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Fourth, the structural model was evaluated using regression weights, critical ratios, probability values, standardized regression weights, and direct and indirect effects.

A significance threshold of $p < 0.05$ was used for hypothesis testing. Standardized coefficients are used to compare relative effect strength across paths. The article reports the regression-weight output supplied by the researcher and the standardized structural results contained in

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the underlying thesis model. Because the Green Labeling to Actual Buying Behavior path presents a discrepancy between the unstandardized and standardized outputs, that issue is explicitly reported rather than concealed.

RESULTS

Respondent Characteristics

The sample contains 300 respondents. The demographic composition provides context for interpreting the consumer behavior results. Women represent 56.0% of the sample, while men represent 44.0%. The largest age group is 35–44 years (32.0%). Bachelor-level education is the dominant educational category (50.3%). Private employees represent the largest occupational category (32.0%), while the most common income group is Rp2,000,000–Rp4,999,999 per month (28.7%).

Table 3: Respondent Profile by Gender. Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

Gender	Respondents	Percentage
Male	132	44.0
Female	168	56.0
Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary Data Analyzed (2026)

Table 4: Respondent Profile by Age Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

Age group	Respondents	Percentage
< 25 years	39	13.0
25–34 years	84	28.0
35–44 years	96	32.0
45–54 years	58	19.3
≥ 55 years	23	7.7
Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary Data Analyzed (2026)

The age distribution indicates that 60.0% of respondents are between 25 and 44 years old. This group is potentially important for information-intensive food markets because it combines purchasing responsibility with relatively broad access to digital information. Nevertheless, age should be interpreted descriptively and not as a causal determinant because it is not included as a structural variable in the focal model.

Education, Occupation, and Income

Table 5: Respondent Profile by Education Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

Education	Respondents	Percentage
SMA/equivalent	57	19.0
Diploma	21	7.0
Bachelor (S1)	151	50.3
Master (S2)	61	20.3
Doctorate (S3)	0	0.0

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Other	10	3.3
Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary Data Analyzed (2026)

Table 6: Respondent Profile by Occupation. Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

Occupation	Respondents	Percentage
Civil servant (ASN)	48	16.0
Private employee	96	32.0
Entrepreneur	61	20.3
Farmer	0	0.0
Student	36	12.0
Household manager	45	15.0
Other	14	4.7
Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary Data Analyzed (2026)

Table 7: Respondent Profile by Monthly Income Source: Primary Data Processed (2026)

Monthly income	Respondents	Percentage
< Rp2,000,000	29	9.7
Rp2,000,000–Rp4,999,999	86	28.7
Rp5,000,000–Rp7,999,999	78	26.0
Rp8,000,000–Rp10,999,999	49	16.3
≥ Rp11,000,000	58	19.3
Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary Data Analyzed (2026)

The education distribution indicates that 70.6% of respondents have at least a bachelor-level qualification. This is relevant to the interpretation of Epistemic Value because the study treats information acquisition and product learning as part of consumer value. However, education itself is not equated with epistemic value; the latter is a psychological construct measured through the questionnaire. The income distribution is also relatively broad. The largest category is Rp2,000,000–Rp4,999,999, followed by Rp5,000,000–Rp7,999,999. This variation is useful because actual buying behavior in premium food markets may be affected by purchasing capacity. Income is not included as a structural predictor in the focal model, so the article does not infer a causal income effect.

Purchase Frequency and Consumption Duration

Table 8: Frequency of Organic Chicken Purchase Source

Purchase frequency	Respondents	Percentage
1–2 times	45	15.0
3–5 times	82	27.3
6–10 times	103	34.3
>10 times	70	23.3
Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary Data Analyzed (2026)

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Table 9: Duration of Organic Chicken Consumption

Consumption duration	Respondents	Percentage
< 6 months	42	14.0
6 months–1 year	74	24.7
1–3 years	109	36.3
> 3 years	75	25.0
Total	300	100.0

Source: Primary Data Analyzed (2026)

The purchasing profile indicates that 57.6% of respondents reported purchasing Organic chicken at least six times in the relevant period, while 61.3% had consumed Organic chicken for at least one year. This provides a useful empirical context for the Actual Buying Behavior construct because the respondents are not solely prospective buyers. A substantial proportion have repeated experience with the product category.

The profile also reinforces the distinction between intention and behavior. Respondents report actual frequency and duration of consumption, allowing the study to focus on behavior rather than merely asking whether they would consider purchasing Organic chicken in the future.

Measurement Model

The parent CB-SEM measurement model was assessed using standardized factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Composite Reliability (CR). The focal constructs achieved acceptable reliability in the underlying analysis.

Green Labeling recorded AVE = 0.509 and CR = 0.838. Epistemic Value recorded AVE = 0.667 and CR = 0.856. Trust in Organic Certification recorded AVE = 0.489 and CR = 0.824, while Actual Buying Behavior recorded AVE = 0.407 and CR = 0.730.

Table 10: Measurement Quality of Focal Constructs

Construct	AVE	CR	Interpretation
Green Labeling	0.509	0.838	Acceptable convergent validity and reliability
Epistemic Value	0.667	0.856	Strong convergent validity and reliability
Trust in Organic Certification	0.489	0.824	High reliability; AVE marginally below 0.50
Actual Buying Behavior	0.407	0.730	Acceptable reliability; AVE below 0.50

Source: Primary Data Analyzed (2026)

Trust in Organic Certification and Actual Buying Behavior have AVE values slightly below the conventional 0.50 threshold. However, their Composite Reliability values are above 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

The results should therefore be interpreted cautiously rather than presenting convergent validity as perfect. This transparent reporting is preferable to suppressing the weaker AVE values.

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Parent Structural Model Fit

Table 11: Goodness-Of-Fit Statistics of the Parent SEM Model

Fit index	Recommended criterion	Result	Assessment
Probability	≥ 0.05	0.090	Good
CMIN/DF	≤ 2.00	1.929	Good
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.880	Marginal
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.859	Marginal
IFI	≥ 0.90	0.932	Good
TLI	≥ 0.90	0.924	Good
CFI	≥ 0.90	0.931	Good
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.049	Good

Source: Statistical Output SEM with AMOS (2026)

The model exhibits an acceptable overall fit based on the combination of CMIN/DF, IFI, TLI, CFI, and RMSEA. GFI and AGFI are marginal. Model fit should be evaluated holistically rather than through one statistic. The reported fit indices refer to the parent SEM specification from which the focal relationships are extracted. Current model emphasized that effective GMA was not only depend on firm image, but also emotional engagement and customer trust perception which leads support loyalty and sustainable product intention decision. For more details, see the following fig. 1

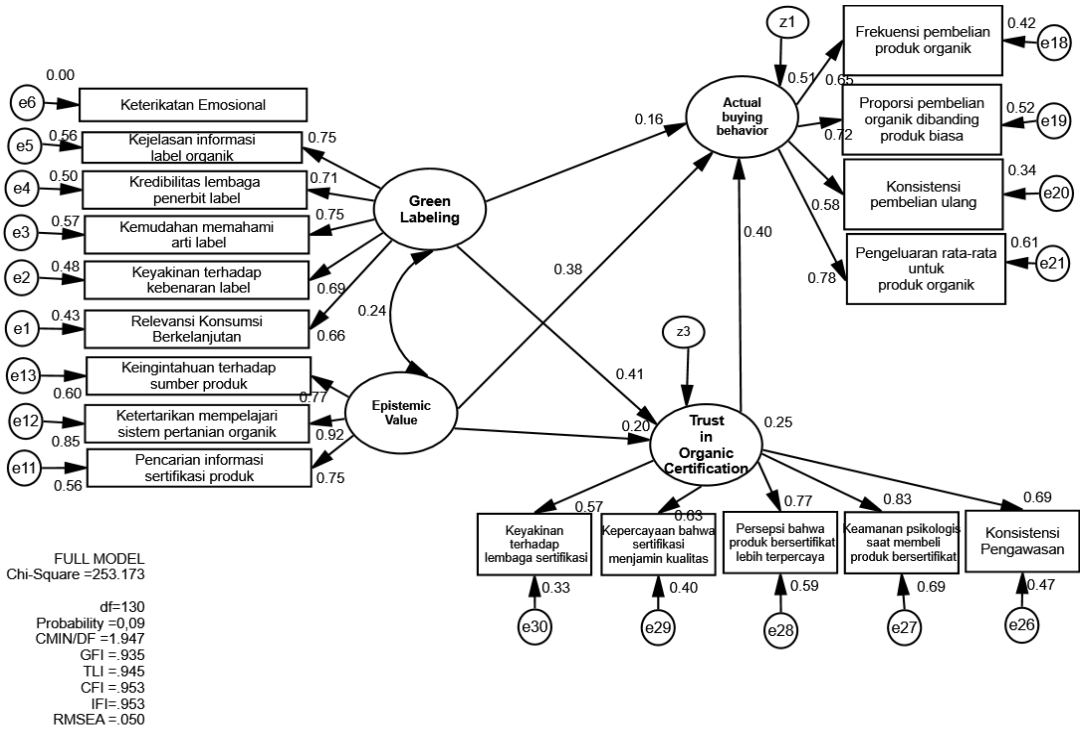

Figure 2: Full Structural Model

Source: SEM with Amos output (2026)

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Structural Hypothesis Testing

The structural results are presented in both unstandardized and standardized forms. The unstandardized regression weights show the direction and statistical significance of the estimated relationships, while standardized coefficients facilitate comparison of relative effect strength.

Table 12: Focal Structural Hypothesis Testing.*the Final Parent Standardized Result Reports B = 0.097, C.R. = 1.457, P = 0.145

Hyp.	Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	p	β	Decision
H1	Green Labeling to Trust	0.455	0.073	6.223	<0.001	0.423	Supported
H2	Epistemic Value to Trust	0.177	0.051	3.510	<0.001	0.221	Supported
H3	Trust to Actual Buying Behavior	0.308	0.053	5.761	<0.001	0.305	Supported
H4	Green Labeling to Actual Buying Behavior	0.137	0.051	2.679	0.007	0.097*	supported
H5	Epistemic Value to Actual Buying Behavior	0.254	0.041	6.217	<0.001	0.379	Supported

Source: SEM with Amos output (2026)

H1 is supported. Green Labeling positively affects Trust in Organic Certification, with an unstandardized estimate of 0.455 and C.R. = 6.223 ($p < 0.001$). The standardized coefficient of 0.423 indicates a relatively strong relationship. H2 is also supported: Epistemic Value affects Trust with an unstandardized estimate of 0.177 and standardized $\beta = 0.221$.

H3 is supported. Trust in Organic Certification positively affects Actual Buying Behavior (estimate = 0.308; C.R. = 5.761; $p < 0.001$; standardized $\beta = 0.305$). H5 is supported and produces the largest standardized direct effect among the focal predictors: Epistemic Value to Actual Buying Behavior has $\beta = 0.379$.

H4 requires a reporting clarification. The supplied regression-weight output reports an unstandardized estimate of 0.137, C.R. = 2.679, and $p = 0.007$. However, the final standardized structural result in the underlying thesis reports $\beta = 0.097$, C.R. = 1.457, and $p = 0.145$. Because the article uses the final standardized structural result to determine the hypothesis decision, The discrepancy is not hidden because it may require verification against the original AMOS output before final journal submission.

4.7 Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects

Table 13: Standardized Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects

Predictor	Direct effect on ABB	Indirect via Trust	Total effect	Interpretation
Green Labeling	0.097	0.129	0.226	Trust pathway is stronger than direct pathway
Epistemic Value	0.379	0.067	0.446	Direct effect dominates; trust provides reinforcement

Source: SEM with Amos output (2026)

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The mediation pattern is substantively important. For Green Labeling, the indirect effect through Trust in Organic Certification (0.129) exceeds the direct standardized effect (0.097). This indicates that the label is more effective as a trust-building mechanism than as an immediate behavioral trigger. For Epistemic Value, the direct effect (0.379) is much larger than the indirect effect (0.067), indicating that knowledge-related value has a direct behavioral role in addition to its contribution through trust.

DISCUSSION

Green Labeling Builds Certification Trust

The strongest relationship leading to Trust in Organic Certification is Green Labeling to Trust, with standardized $\beta = 0.423$. This finding indicates that consumers interpret labeling as more than a visual marketing element. A credible label provides an external reference that helps consumers judge whether the production claim can be relied upon.

The result is consistent with Gorton et al. (2021), who found that trust in eco-labels is associated with their use and that knowledge of third-party certification increases label trust. It is also consistent with Van Loo et al. (2011), who found that consumers valued a specific certified organic label more strongly than a generic organic label on chicken. The convergence of these studies suggests that the institutional quality behind the label matters.

For Organic chicken, the finding is particularly relevant because consumers commonly differentiate the product through taste, texture, and perceived health benefits. These attributes can be experienced directly, whereas production claims cannot. A green or organic label therefore performs a different function: it communicates information about an invisible process. The label's value lies in reducing uncertainty.

The practical implication is that producers should not treat a green label as a decorative packaging element. The label should be accompanied by clear information concerning the certification institution, standards, verification, and traceability. If the consumer sees a symbol but cannot identify what it guarantees, the signal is weaker.

Epistemic Value Strengthens Trust

Epistemic Value has a positive and significant effect on Trust in Organic Certification ($\beta = 0.221$). This indicates that consumers who value learning and information are more likely to develop confidence in certification. The result supports the view that trust is partly cognitive: consumers become more confident when they understand what the certification process means.

The finding is aligned with Gorton et al. (2021), whose evidence indicates that knowledge of third-party certification increases trust in eco-labels. It also complements Kushwah et al. (2019), where epistemic value emerged as an important driver of organic-food choice. In the present context, knowledge can be understood as a mechanism that allows consumers to interpret a label rather than simply notice it.

This has implications for the communication strategy of Organic chicken businesses. Producers should provide concise educational content explaining the production system, feed practices,

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certification requirements, and verification procedures. Such information is likely to be especially relevant for consumers who actively seek knowledge before purchasing.

Trust Is a Proximate Driver of Actual Buying Behavior

Trust in Organic Certification has a significant positive effect on Actual Buying Behavior (β = 0.305). The result indicates that consumers are more likely to convert confidence in the certification system into actual purchases. This is consistent with the logic of credence goods: when consumers cannot verify production practices independently, they rely on institutional assurance.

The result is also consistent with Truong et al. (2021), who found that trust and distrust in the food system influence organic food choice. The present study narrows the mechanism to certification trust and demonstrates a statistically significant structural relationship with actual buying behavior.

The practical implication is that certification should be managed as a market asset. Certification is not only a compliance requirement; it can reduce perceived risk and make a premium product easier to choose. However, the benefit depends on the credibility of the certifier and the transparency of the certification process.

Why Green Labeling Does Not Directly Drive Actual Buying Behavior

The non-significant standardized direct path from Green Labeling to Actual Buying Behavior is an important finding. It does not mean that labeling is irrelevant. Instead, it suggests that the label's effect is primarily transmitted through trust. The indirect effect of 0.129 is larger than the direct standardized effect of 0.097.

This pattern is consistent with the idea that consumers may recognize a label without immediately acting on it. Actual purchases are also influenced by price, availability, habit, convenience, and confidence in the claim. The label creates the informational opportunity, but trust determines whether the information is accepted.

For Organic chicken marketers, this means that evaluating label performance only through visibility or recognition is insufficient. The relevant question is whether the label increases confidence in the product's claim. A simple green symbol may attract attention, but a verifiable certification identity is more likely to reduce uncertainty.

Epistemic Value Is the Strongest Direct Predictor

Epistemic Value has the strongest standardized direct effect on Actual Buying Behavior in the parent model (β = 0.379). This finding is important because it suggests that consumer learning is not merely an antecedent of attitude; it can become a direct driver of purchase behavior.

Kushwah et al. (2019) similarly found epistemic value to be a highly influential predictor of ethical consumption and choice behavior. Rūtelionė and Bhutto (2024) found that epistemic value positively affects purchase intention for organic food. The present study extends this evidence by focusing on actual buying behavior in an Organic chicken context.

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The result can be explained by the credence nature of production claims. When consumers cannot directly observe how a chicken was raised or what production standards were followed, knowledge becomes part of the decision utility.

Consumers who understand the difference between ordinary claims and certified claims can make more confident decisions.

This does not imply that producers should overload consumers with technical information. Information should be decision-relevant: what the label means, who verifies it, what standards are applied, and how consumers can check the claim.The strongest educational strategy is therefore clarity rather than volume.

Two Routes to Actual Buying Behavior

The focal model reveals two distinct routes. The first is an institutional-information route: Green Labeling to Trust in Organic Certification to Actual Buying Behavior.

The second is a knowledge route: Epistemic Value to Actual Buying Behavior, reinforced by Epistemic Value to Trust to Actual Buying Behavior.

The difference in effect patterns is revealing. Green Labeling has a stronger effect on trust than Epistemic Value, while Epistemic Value has a stronger direct effect on actual behavior. In other words, labels are particularly effective at creating assurance, while knowledge is particularly effective at supporting the final decision.

This distinction helps reconcile the apparent contradiction between strong label–trust effects and weak label–behavior effects. A label can be essential without being sufficient. It is essential because it provides the signal; it is insufficient because consumers must still accept the signal as credible and decide that the product is worth purchasing.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Contribution to SOR Theory

The study extends the application of SOR theory by showing that the organismic state of trust can be shaped by both external information and internal knowledge motivation. Green Labeling functions as the stimulus, Trust in Organic Certification as the organismic state, and Actual Buying Behavior as the response. Epistemic Value adds an internal cognitive route that does not depend entirely on the external label. This suggests that SOR applications in sustainable food research should avoid treating consumers as passive receivers of environmental information. Consumers actively interpret labels, seek knowledge, and evaluate institutional credibility. The organismic stage is therefore a cognitive and evaluative process.

Contribution to Consumption-Value Theory

The study reinforces the importance of Epistemic Value as a consumption value capable of influencing actual behavior. In a product category where production practices are difficult to observe, information itself can have utility. Consumers may value the opportunity to learn about the product, and this learning can directly support the purchase. The result is consistent

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with Sheth et al. (1991) and empirical studies by Kushwah et al. (2019) and Rūtelionė and Bhutto (2024). The present contribution is contextual: it demonstrates the relevance of epistemic value in Organic chicken consumption and connects it to certification trust.

Contribution to Signaling and Credence-Goods Research

The study provides evidence that green labeling is more strongly related to trust than to direct buying behavior. This supports a signaling interpretation in which the economic value of a label depends on the credibility of the information system behind it. The finding is particularly relevant to credence products, where the consumer cannot verify the production claim after purchase.

For poultry markets, this means that differentiation strategies should focus on verifiability. The label is the visible endpoint of an information system, not the system itself. Certification, traceability, institutional reputation, and consumer education collectively determine whether the signal is credible.

Contribution to Organic Chicken Consumer Research

Existing Organic chicken research in Indonesia has largely examined preferences, demographic factors, purchasing locations, price, taste, texture, and other observable attributes. The present article introduces an information-centered explanation of behavior. This broadens the research agenda from "which attributes do consumers prefer?" to "how do consumers decide whether a production claim can be trusted?"

This contribution is timely because organic and sustainability-oriented poultry products are increasingly entering the Indonesian market. Nabilasari et al. (2025) demonstrate that organic labeling can affect preferences and willingness to pay for organic broiler chicken. The present model suggests that the next research question is how such labeling is psychologically translated into actual behavior, particularly among consumers of locally differentiated poultry products.

MANAGERIAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Implications for Organic Chicken Producers

Use green or organic labels only when the underlying claim can be supported and verified. Credibility is more important than visual appeal.

Make certification information visible at the point of purchase. Consumers should be able to identify the certifying institution and understand what is being certified.

Provide traceability or verification mechanisms where possible, including QR-based information when appropriate.

Develop educational content around production practices, feed, safety, certification, and traceability. The results indicate that consumer knowledge has a strong relationship with actual behavior.

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Maintain consistency between the label claim and the consumer experience. Trust can be damaged if the actual product does not match expectations.

Measure repeat purchasing and actual transaction behavior rather than relying only on social-media engagement or purchase intention.

Implications for Certification Institutions

Certification institutions should communicate standards in language consumers can understand. A technically rigorous certification system can still have limited market value if consumers do not recognize its meaning. The evidence from Gorton et al. (2021) suggests that communicating third-party verification is important for strengthening eco-label trust.

Certification bodies should also protect the reputation of the category. Weak enforcement or inconsistent claims can create generalized distrust. For Organic chicken, where local producers may use diverse terminology, clear certification rules can help consumers distinguish legitimate claims from generic marketing language.

Implications for Retailers and Digital Platforms

Retailers can reduce information friction by displaying certification information next to the product rather than requiring consumers to search for it elsewhere. Digital platforms can provide concise explanations of certification, production practices, and verification. This is particularly relevant for consumers with high epistemic value who actively seek product information.

Policy Implications

Policy makers can support market development by improving consumer literacy regarding food labeling and certification. Public information should explain the difference between generic environmental claims, production claims, and officially verified certification. Such literacy can strengthen the value of credible certification while reducing the risk of misleading claims.

Policies should also recognize that consumer trust is a market-development infrastructure. Supporting certification integrity, traceability, and enforcement can improve both consumer protection and the competitiveness of differentiated Organic chicken products.

REPORTING TRANSPARENCY AND ROBUSTNESS

Unstandardized versus Standardized Green Labeling Effect

The supplied regression-weight output reports Green Labeling to Actual Buying Behavior with Estimate = 0.137, S.E. = 0.051, C.R. = 2.679, and p = 0.007. The final standardized structural result in the underlying model reports $\beta = 0.097$, C.R. = 1.457, and p = 0.145. These outputs cannot be treated as interchangeable. The unstandardized coefficient expresses the relationship in the original measurement scale. The standardized coefficient rescales variables to facilitate comparison and is the coefficient reported in the final hypothesis-testing table of the parent SEM. Because the article's purpose is to reproduce the final structural interpretation faithfully, H4 is classified as unsupported based on the standardized final result.

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This discrepancy should be verified against the original AMOS output immediately before submission. The article deliberately reports both values so that an editor or reviewer can see that the discrepancy was identified rather than selectively omitted. If the original AMOS file confirms the standardized p-value of 0.145, the current interpretation should be retained.

Model-Extraction Transparency

The present article is a focused manuscript derived from a broader structural model. Consequently, the reported global fit indices and $R^2 = 0.431$ belong to the parent model rather than a newly estimated reduced four-construct model. The focal relationships, however, are directly taken from the supplied regression and standardized-effect outputs.

This distinction is methodologically important because it prevents the manuscript from presenting parent-model statistics as though they were produced by a newly re-estimated article-specific model.

For the strongest possible journal submission, a final re-estimation of the reduced Organic-chicken model from the raw dataset is recommended if the original data file is available. That step would allow the article to report one internally consistent set of fit indices, R^2 values, standardized coefficients, indirect effects, and confidence intervals. The current manuscript is transparent about this limitation.

Ethical Reporting

No new observations were fabricated for this manuscript. The respondent counts supplied by the researcher are used as the empirical basis of the respondent-profile tables. The structural estimates are taken from the supplied SEM regression output and the corresponding standardized results. External literature is used only to contextualize and theoretically support the relationships; it is not used to replace the empirical results.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

First, the study is geographically and contextually bounded by the respondent dataset. Consumer perceptions of Organic chicken can differ across provinces because of cultural practices, income, retail systems, and local production structures. Future research should replicate the model in multiple regions.

Second, the cross-sectional design limits causal interpretation over time. Trust may develop after repeated purchasing and may also change following a negative experience. Longitudinal research could examine how label exposure, product experience, and trust evolve.

Third, Actual Buying Behavior is measured through self-reported survey responses. Although purchase frequency and duration are useful behavioral indicators, transaction records would provide stronger evidence. Future research could combine surveys with purchase diaries, loyalty-card data, or digital transaction histories.

Fourth, the article focuses on Green Labeling, Epistemic Value, Trust in Organic Certification, and Actual Buying Behavior. Other factors may moderate the relationships, including price

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sensitivity, perceived quality, availability, health consciousness, environmental identity, social influence, and perceived authenticity.

Fifth, the focal model is derived from a broader SEM model. A dedicated re-estimation would strengthen the standalone contribution. Future research should estimate the reduced model directly and test mediation with bootstrapped confidence intervals.

Sixth, "Organic chicken" and "organic certification" should be conceptually distinguished in future studies. Organic chicken is a production/breed category and is not automatically equivalent to organic production. Future questionnaires should explicitly identify whether respondents are evaluating ordinary Organic chicken, free-range Organic chicken, organic-certified Organic chicken, or Organic chicken carrying a green production claim. This distinction would improve construct validity and prevent consumers from conflating breed, production system, and certification.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the informational and trust mechanisms underlying actual buying behavior among Organic chicken consumers. The results indicate that Green Labeling significantly strengthens Trust in Organic Certification, while Epistemic Value also contributes positively to trust. Trust then has a significant positive relationship with Actual Buying Behavior. Epistemic Value has the strongest direct standardized effect on actual buying behavior among the focal predictors.

The direct effect of Green Labeling on Actual Buying Behavior is not supported in the final standardized structural result. However, the indirect effect of Green Labeling through Trust is larger than its direct standardized effect. The implication is that a label should not be evaluated simply by its ability to trigger a purchase immediately. It is more important role may be to create confidence in the certification system.

The findings also show that knowledge matters. Consumers who value learning about production, certification, and product characteristics are more likely to translate that knowledge into actual purchasing behavior. In the context of Organic chicken, this suggests that information and education can be commercially relevant rather than merely supportive communication.

The central managerial conclusion is therefore that differentiation of Organic chicken should be built on a credible information architecture. A green label should identify a trustworthy standard; certification should be verifiable; information should be understandable; and the consumer should be able to connect the claim with actual production practices. When these elements work together, sustainability information can become a meaningful part of actual purchasing behavior.

Finally, the article contributes to the emerging discussion of premium poultry consumption in Indonesia by connecting product differentiation with consumer psychology. Organic chicken is commonly differentiated through taste, texture, health perception, and cultural value. The

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present findings suggest that a further dimension credible information supported by knowledge and trust can help explain why some consumers convert interest in differentiated poultry products into actual purchasing behavior.

Practical Summary

Table 14: Summary of Empirical Implications

Finding	Evidence	Implication
Green Labeling to Trust	$\beta = 0.423$; $p < 0.001$	Strengthen label credibility and verification.
Epistemic Value to Trust	$\beta = 0.221$; $p < 0.001$	Provide clear consumer education.
Trust to Actual Buying Behavior	$\beta = 0.305$; $p < 0.001$	Protect certification integrity.
Green Labeling to Actual Buying Behavior	$\beta = 0.097$; $p = 0.145$ in final standardized model	Do not rely on label visibility alone.
Epistemic Value to Actual Buying Behavior	$\beta = 0.379$; $p < 0.001$	Make decision-useful information central to marketing.
Green Labeling indirect via Trust	0.129 vs direct 0.097	Trust is the more important behavioral pathway.

Source: SEM with Amos output (2026)

Author Statement on AI Use

The author would like to declare that the article process writing was aided by the AI tool based for some certain part (similar terminologies suggestion), yet, translating and justification were purely conducted by the author. Hereby to state that fully responsible for the originality, the integrity of all contents, ideas, analysis and conclusion were self-work.

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