



The Meaning of Social and Ethical Values in Consumer Decision-Making for Sustainable Products in Urban Markets

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how social and ethical values shape urban consumers' decisions to purchase sustainable products. Using a phenomenological qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight active buyers of sustainable products in Ambon City. Thematic interpretation reveals that purchasing decisions are influenced not only by economic considerations but also by interconnected moral, social, and cultural values. Five key dimensions emerge: environmental moral responsibility, social identity, personal integrity, ethical awareness, and cultural context. The findings highlight that these integrated values play a strategic role in ethical decision-making within sustainable markets. Practically, the study suggests that marketers and policymakers should emphasize social value and responsibility in their communication and branding strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Rising global awareness of sustainability and social responsibility has driven significant changes in consumer behavior, especially in urban markets. Consumers now not only judge products in terms of price and quality, but also in terms of the moral, ethical, and social values contained in them. This trend shows that purchasing decisions are increasingly influenced by awareness of the environmental and social impacts caused by consumption (Simanjuntak, 2024). In Indonesia, this is reflected in the increasing preference for eco-friendly products, such as goods with recycled packaging or sustainable local products. This phenomenon underscores the need for a deeper understanding of how social and ethical values shape consumer behavior. Therefore, this issue has become very relevant for the development of a value-oriented sustainable marketing strategy.

Previous studies have shown that social values play an important role in shaping consumer behavior toward sustainable products. Consumers with high social orientation tend to choose products that reflect concern for the welfare of the community and the surrounding environment (Kutaula, 2024). In this context, consumption is no longer individual, but rather a means of expression of social identity and solidarity with the community. Urban consumers often interpret ethical consumption as part of the social responsibility inherent in their status and lifestyle. However, most previous research has focused on buying intent, not on the deep meanings that drive actual decisions. This gap needs to be bridged through an approach that is able to understand the moral values behind the act of consumption.

In addition to social values, ethical values are also a key component in the formation of sustainable consumption behavior. Consumers with high ethical awareness see purchasing decisions as a form of moral responsibility for the environment and social justice (Sinaga et al., 2024). These ethical values encourage the emergence of behaviors that are in line with the principles of justice, transparency, and sustainability in every economic decision. However, in developing countries such as Indonesia, commitment to consumption ethics is often hampered by limited access and purchasing power of the public. This raises a dilemma between moral idealism and economic reality that has not been explored in depth. Therefore, understanding the meaning of ethics in sustainable consumer behavior is important to decipher the socio-economic dynamics in urban markets.

Studies in various countries show that social and ethical factors play a big role in strengthening loyalty to sustainable products. For example, research by Lin et al., (2023) found that personal norms and perceptions of corporate social responsibility have a direct effect on the hedonistic and utilitarian values of consumers. However, most of these findings come from the context of developed countries with high levels of environmental awareness and access to information. In the context of Indonesia, especially in the eastern region such as Ambon, there are still limited research that explores how consumers understand and internalize these values. Unique socio-cultural conditions make consumption behavior in this region different from that of large metropolitan cities. Thus, a

study is needed that can reveal the meaning of social and ethical values from the perspective of local consumers in depth.

The research gap is also seen from the methodological approach used in previous studies. Most studies still use a quantitative approach that only explains the relationship between variables without understanding the context of consumers' personal experiences (Munar & Villaseñor, 2023). In fact, consumption behaviors based on ethical values are often reflective and subjective, so they require a qualitative approach to uncover hidden meanings. Phenomenological research allows researchers to understand the moral values, perceptions, and motivations behind purchasing decisions. This approach provides space for the exploration of meaning formed through social and cultural interactions of consumers. Thus, phenomenological qualitative methods are considered the most appropriate to answer these gaps.

Based on this description, this study aims to interpret the meaning of social and ethical values in the consumer decision-making process for sustainable products in the Indonesian urban market, especially in Ambon City. The main focus of this study is to understand how consumers interpret social responsibility, personal integrity, and ethical awareness in consumption actions. In addition, this study also aims to identify the moral factors that shape the preference for sustainable products. A phenomenological approach was chosen to explore the subjective experiences and meanings of consumers who actively purchase sustainable products. The results of this study are expected to explain the social and moral dynamics that are the basis for purchasing decisions. Thus, this research contributes to the development of a more contextual and humanistic theory of sustainable consumer behavior.

The selection of the research location in Ambon City was based on the consideration that this area is one of the developing urban markets in the eastern region of Indonesia. The city of Ambon has rich socio-cultural characteristics and a community of people who are beginning to show concern for the environment. Sustainable local products, such as eco-friendly seafood and recycling-based handicraft products, are starting to gain attention from consumers. However, until now, there have not been many studies that have examined ethical consumption behavior in this region in depth. By making Ambon the location of the study, this study has the potential to provide a new understanding of sustainable consumer behavior outside of the metropolitan context. This enriches the geographical and cultural perspectives in the sustainable marketing literature in Indonesia.

Theoretically, this research is expected to contribute to the development of consumer value theory, social identity theory, and ethical behavior theory in marketing. The results of this study can broaden understanding of how social and ethical values shape the meaning of sustainable consumption in the context of emerging markets. From a practical perspective, this research provides input for marketers in designing communication and branding strategies that are oriented towards moral and social values. Marketers can leverage these findings to build stronger emotional connections with consumers through socially responsible-based messaging. In addition, this research can be the basis for

policymakers in developing sustainable consumption education programs in the community. Thus, this research has strategic value for the development of sustainable marketing science and practices in Indonesia.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Shifting Paradigms of Urban Consumer Behavior

Changes in the lifestyle of urban communities have formed a new paradigm in consumption behavior. Consumers are now no longer only oriented towards functional satisfaction, but also on the social and moral meaning behind the products they buy. According to Santoso (2024), urban consumers increasingly associate their self-identity with responsible consumption practices, such as buying local and environmentally friendly products. This can also be seen from the increasing trend of "conscious buying" that combines economic, social, and ethical values (Chang & Lee, 2023). This phenomenon shows that consumption decisions in big cities cannot be separated from the dimensions of morality and social consciousness that develop with modernization.

Social Values as a Catalyst for Sustainable Consumption

Social values play an important role as a key driver of sustainable consumption behavior. Consumers with high social orientation tend to be concerned with collective well-being, not just personal interests (Huang & Lee, 2022). A study by Ramadhani and Yusuf (2024) found that social participation and a sense of community in urban communities increase preference for sustainable products. In this context, sustainable consumption is a means of expressing social solidarity and responsibility towards the environment. Consumers not only buy products because of their benefits, but also because of the symbolic value that represents their social concerns.

Ethical Awareness and Moral Responsibility in Consumption

Ethical awareness is becoming an increasingly prominent factor in consumer decision-making. Consumers with high levels of moral awareness view consumption as a form of social responsibility that has ethical implications for humans and the environment (Fernandez & Patel, 2023). In a recent study, Suryani et al. (2025) suggested that urban consumer ethics are formed from the interaction between personal values, culture, and exposure to sustainability campaigns. Moral values such as fairness, honesty, and transparency are the main considerations in choosing products. Thus, purchasing decisions are no longer transactional, but rather reflective of individual moral principles.

The Role of Brand Ethics and Corporate Responsibility

In the era of value marketing, the company's ethical image is a strategic aspect that influences consumer decisions. Urban consumers are now demanding transparency, honesty, and social responsibility from the brands they support (Nasution et al., 2024). Research by Chen and Xu (2023) shows that trust in a company's ethical commitment increases loyalty and purchase intent towards sustainable products. This shows that consumers not only judge products by their physical qualities, but also by the moral behavior of the producer.

Therefore, brand ethics is an important bridge between consumer social value and sustainable purchasing decisions.

Cultural and Contextual Dimensions of Ethical Consumption

Cultural context plays an important role in shaping the meaning of social values and consumer ethics. In Indonesia, sustainable consumption is often influenced by the value of mutual cooperation, local wisdom, and social relations between citizens (Marpaung, 2023). A study by Lestari and Sari (2024) shows that consumers in eastern Indonesia, such as Ambon, interpret sustainability as a form of responsibility towards the community and the environment. Thus, ethical consumption behavior in urban markets is influenced not only by global economic factors, but also by the construction of local cultural values that shape the outlook on ethics and sustainability.

Digital Influence and the Rise of Ethical Consumerism

Digital transformation accelerates the dissemination of information about social and environmental issues, which ultimately affects consumption patterns. Social media is becoming a new space for consumers to assess brand ethics and advocate for sustainable consumption (Gómez & Liu, 2024). According to the results of research by Hanifah et al. (2025), the young generation in big cities increasingly rely on digital trust in evaluating the sustainability claims of a product. Social media-based campaigns that highlight ethical values have proven effective in driving changes in purchasing behavior. This shows that ethics is now not only built through corporate narratives, but also through digital participation of the community.

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach and Design

This research uses a qualitative approach with phenomenological design to deeply understand the meaning of social and ethical values in the decision-making process of consumers for sustainable products in urban markets. The phenomenological approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the subjective experiences and reflective consciousness of individuals in specific socio-cultural contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2024). This design focuses on trying to find the essence of the consumer experience that links moral and social values with everyday consumption behavior. Through this method, the research seeks to interpret how ethical awareness and social responsibility are formed as the basis for sustainable product purchasing decisions.

Research Setting and Participants

The research was carried out in Ambon City, which is one of the emerging urban markets in the eastern region of Indonesia. The city was chosen because it began to show an increase in public awareness of sustainable consumption practices and the emergence of local environmentally friendly products, such as sustainable fishery products and resale-based handicrafts (Lestari & Sari, 2024). The study participants consisted of 8 consumers who were selected using

purposive sampling techniques based on criteria: (1) actively purchasing sustainable products for at least the last six months, (2) understanding social and ethical issues in consumption, and (3) willing to participate in in-depth interviews. This number of participants is considered adequate because it is in accordance with the principle of data saturation in phenomenological studies, where the repetition of the pattern of meaning has been achieved (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was carried out through three main techniques, namely field observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and supporting documentation. The first stage was non-participatory observation conducted at several sustainable product sales locations in Ambon City, such as modern traditional markets, eco-friendly shops, and local product centers. The second stage is a semi-structured in-depth interview that functions to explore personal experiences, perceptions, and the meaning of social and ethical values that consumers have in making purchasing decisions. The third stage is that this documentation is used as a complementary source that strengthens the results of observations and interviews, as well as helps verify field findings.

Validity and Trustworthiness

To ensure the credibility and validity of the findings, this study applies the principle of trustworthiness through four main strategies. First, the triangulation method was carried out by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. Second, member checking is applied by asking the informant to confirm the results of the initial interpretation so that the findings reflect their authentic experience. Third, the researcher's reflection is used to control subjective bias and maintain interpretive objectivity. Fourth, trail audits are designed to transparently document the analysis process, from transcription, encoding, to theme preparation (Nowell et al., 2024).

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) thematic analysis as developed by Braun and Clarke (2021). This analysis is carried out through six stages: (1) reading and understanding the interview transcript thoroughly, (2) conducting initial coding of important meanings, (3) identifying emerging themes, (4) reviewing the relationships between themes, (5) defining and naming the main themes, and (6) constructing an interpretive narrative. The analysis is assisted by NVivo 12 Plus software to organize data and visualize relationships between themes (QSR International, 2023). The final result is in the form of findings that illustrate the essence of consumer experience related to social meaning, ethical awareness, and moral responsibility in making decisions to purchase sustainable products.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Moral Responsibility toward the Environment

The results of the study show that one of the most powerful dimensions that influences consumers' decisions in purchasing sustainable products is moral responsibility towards the environment. For the informants, the act of buying environmentally friendly products is not just a rational choice, but a reflection of inner awareness and a moral call to preserve nature. They consider that every consumption decision has consequences for the sustainability of the earth, so choosing environmentally friendly products is considered a form of real contribution to the common future.

Most informants describe sustainable consumption as "small, big meaningful actions." One of the participants stated, "*If I buy soap whose packaging is recyclable, it feels like I'm participating in keeping our ocean clean*" (K3, interview July 10, 2025). Another informant added, "*I am aware that if we continue to buy single-use plastic products, our grandchildren will be in difficulty. So I choose the ones that can be reused*" (K1, interview July 11, 2025).

This value of moral responsibility does not stand alone, but is firmly rooted in the socio-cultural context of Ambon which emphasizes harmony between humans and nature. Some informants said that they grew up with the family teaching not to take more than needed from the sea and land. "*In the past, my mother always said, take enough fish, don't be greedy. Now I apply that principle when buying goods*" (K4, interview July 13, 2025). This statement shows that ecological awareness in Ambon is often born from local values that are inherited across generations.

In addition, there is a spiritual drive in understanding environmental responsibility. One of the informants said, "*For me, taking care of the earth is worship. God loves us nature, so it is our duty to take care of it*" (K7, interview July 15, 2025). This view shows that sustainable consumption is not only based on ecological concerns, but also by moral and religious beliefs that place humans as guardians of creation. Thus, the decision to purchase environmentally friendly products in Ambon reflects moral awareness that comes from ecological, spiritual, and social relationships that are interconnected.

Social Identity and Ethical Consumption

The second finding revealed that sustainable consumption in Ambon is also a means of forming a new social identity. The informants interpreted the decision to buy sustainable products as part of self-expression—to be caring, responsible, and ethical individuals in modern social life. They feel that by choosing eco-friendly products, they are not only buying goods, but also affirming who they are in front of society.

One of the informants said, "*If we buy local products that are environmentally friendly, people know we care. Now it's a lifestyle, not just a trend*" (K5, July 9, 2025 interview). This statement suggests that ethical consumption has become a symbol of a new social status based on moral values, not material. A young informant added, "*My friends in the office often tell each other what products are the most 'green'. I feel proud to be an example*" (K6, interview July 12, 2025).

In the social context of Ambon, which tends to be collective, consumption behavior is also influenced by community perception. *"I choose to buy from a store that cares about the environment because it is part of our community. If everyone participates, the impact will be great"* (K8, interview July 14, 2025). This speech illustrates that social solidarity is the driving force for the emergence of sustainable consumption. Consumers do not want to be just buyers, but agents of social change in their environment.

Social identity through ethical consumption also serves as a form of resistance to irresponsible consumptive culture. *"I am no longer comfortable buying cheap goods but making a lot of waste. It's better to be a little but beneficial for the environment"* (K2, July 10, 2025 interview). In this case, sustainable consumption is a way for consumers to affirm their integrity while marking a shift in the values of Ambon's urban society towards collective ethical awareness.

Personal Integrity in Market Behavior

The third dimension found is personal integrity in market behavior. The informants described integrity as the consistency between the moral values believed in and the actual actions in the purchasing process. For them, choosing sustainable products is a form of personal responsibility to live according to ethical principles and honesty.

One of the informants emphasized, *"If I knew that the product was damaging to the environment, I wouldn't want to buy it even though the price was cheap"* (K1, interview July 11, 2025). This attitude suggests that consumption decisions are not only determined by economic considerations, but by a commitment to personal value. Another informant said, *"I am willing to pay more as long as I am sure that the product is honest and does not deceive about the materials or production process"* (K3, interview July 10, 2025).

Personal integrity is also evident from the active efforts of consumers to check information before purchasing. *"I usually check the labels, find out the origin of the ingredients. Sometimes I ask the seller directly if I am not sure"* (K4, interview July 13, 2025). This practice shows a shift from impulsive consumption patterns to reflective consumption, where decisions are made with moral considerations and transparency.

For some informants, integrity in consumption is also a form of moral education for families. *"I have taught my children since childhood: if you buy something, think about the impact on the environment first. That's part of our responsibility"* (F6, July 12, 2025 interview). Through this experience, sustainable consumption is not only an economic act, but also a means of instilling ethical values across generations. Personal integrity thus becomes the foundation that leads consumers to maintain moral consistency in the midst of modern market dynamics.

Integration of Ethical Awareness and Consumer Decision-Making

The fourth finding highlights that ethical awareness and consumption decisions are interintegrated in consumers' thinking and acting processes. The informants explained that they no longer separate between the moral aspect and

the buying decision. For them, every transaction is a form of ethical choice that reflects who they are and what values they stand for.

One informant explained, "*Now every time I want to buy something, I always think: is this good for the environment or not?*" (K2, interview July 10, 2025). This awareness is not just a moral spontaneity, but the result of a long process of social learning and personal reflection. "*I used to not really care, but after seeing a lot of campaigns on social media, I began to realize that our consumption can have a big impact*" (K5, interview July 9, 2025).

This integration is also formed from social interaction in the work environment and community. "*We in the eco-living community often exchange information about environmentally friendly products. So the decision to buy is like the result of a joint discussion*" (K7, interview July 15, 2025). Through the exchange of information and experience, consumers internalize ethical values into everyday habits.

The role of digital media is also very significant. "*I learned a lot from social media. There is an account that discusses the impact of waste, it made me aware. Now I think twice before buying products that are not environmentally friendly*" (K8, July 14, 2025 interview). This process shows that consumer ethical awareness in Ambon grows interactively through digital communication, moral reflection, and social experiences. The integration between ethics and purchasing decisions is finally forming a new consumption pattern that is more conscious, responsible, and reflective.

Cultural Context of Ethical Consumption in Ambon

The last theme emphasizes the importance of cultural context in shaping the ethical consumption behavior of the Ambon people. Values such as mutual cooperation, honesty, and a sense of responsibility to the community are the moral foundations in sustainable consumption practices. For the informants, buying local products is not only about economic support, but also an expression of social solidarity and respect for the local culture.

One of the informants said, "*If I buy from a local artisan, I feel like I help the neighbors too. It's part of our social responsibility*" (K3, July 10, 2025 interview). The value of togetherness inherent in Maluku culture, such as the concept of *pela gandong*, strengthens consumer motivation to support sustainable products. "*In Ambon, we are used to helping each other. So if there are environmentally friendly products from friends in the community, we will definitely support them*" (K5, interview July 9, 2025).

In addition to the value of solidarity, there is also spiritual awareness and social ethics that influence consumer behavior. "*I believe, if we buy goods in the right way, the sustenance is also a blessing*" (K1, interview July 11, 2025). This view shows that consumption practices in Ambon are often associated with morality and life balance.

Some informants also highlighted that sustainable consumption is a means to maintain local cultural identity in the midst of globalization. "*Environmentally friendly local products are not just goods, but part of Ambon's identity. If we don't buy it, we will lose our culture*" (K7, interview July 15, 2025).

Thus, ethical consumption behavior in Ambon reflects the integration between traditional values and a modern consciousness that places sustainability as part of social and cultural life.

DISCUSSION

This study confirms that consumers' decision to purchase sustainable products in urban markets is not only determined by economic factors, but also by the moral, social, and cultural values that shape their ethical awareness. The five main dimensions found are moral responsibility towards the environment, social identity, personal integrity, integration of ethical awareness, and cultural context. This suggests that sustainable consumption behavior is a reflection of the individual's value orientation and reflective awareness of the social and ecological impacts of his or her actions.

These findings support the Value-Belief-Norm Theory (VBN) which explains that pro-environmental behavior is born from personal value systems, beliefs in moral consequences, and norms of personal responsibility (Han, 2021; Hong et al., 2024). In the context of Ambon, moral awareness of the environment arises from the internalization of local values that reinforce social norms, so that sustainable consumption is not just an individual action, but also a reflection of collective responsibility.

The dimension of moral responsibility towards the environment shows that the decision to buy environmentally friendly products is triggered by ethical and emotional awareness. Consumers feel a moral obligation to contribute to the preservation of nature. This is in line with the findings of Ogiemwonyi et al. (2023) who show that moral beliefs and environmental ethics play a significant role in encouraging green consumption behavior.

Furthermore, these findings are also in line with moral identity theory (Aquino & Reed, 2022), which states that individuals who internalize moral values into their own identities will tend to exhibit behaviors consistent with those values, including in the context of consumption. The ecological awareness of Ambon consumers colored by spiritual values and local wisdom shows a form of integration of morality and ecology, which expands the concept of moral responsibility in global literature. However, the difference with the context of developed countries lies in the stronger spiritual and social dimensions. If in Europe or America ecological awareness comes from formal education and public campaigns (Karimzadeh, 2024), in Ambon the awareness is born from cultural and religious teachings, showing a form of "eco-spirituality" typical of local communities.

Social identity is an important aspect in understanding sustainable consumption in urban society. Consumers use consumption practices as a means of expressing self-worth and social membership. These findings reinforce the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2020) theory which states that individuals build social identities through participation in groups that share common values and beliefs. Karimzadeh's research (2024) also highlights that consumers who view themselves as part of an ethical community are more likely to make purchases that reflect social responsibility. In Ambon, the consumption

of sustainable local products is a symbol of moral identity, not just an economic choice. This indicates a shift in values from materialism to a more humanistic "moral consumerism" (Syed et al., 2024).

Personal integrity was found to be a determining factor in the consistency of ethical consumption behavior. Consumers with high integrity demonstrate a fit between beliefs and actions, even when faced with price or convenience compromises. This supports the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 2020) which states that ethical behavior is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control of behavior. Research by Ladeira et al. (2025) shows that individuals with high ethical awareness remain consistent in purchasing decisions despite experiencing social or economic stress. Ambon consumers show a similar pattern: their decisions are not simply following trends, but the result of personal reflection on their moral values. This shows ethical maturity which is an important social capital in strengthening a sustainable economy.

The results show that ethical awareness is now integrated into every stage of consumer decision-making, from needs assessment to product evaluation. This reflective process shows that sustainable consumption is a form of ethical reasoning, not impulsive behavior. These findings confirm Syed's (2024) view that ethical decisions are the result of the interaction between personal values, social norms, and information obtained through digital media. The role of social media as a space for moral learning is also strengthened by the study of Munaro (2024), which found that digital campaigns are able to increase sustainable purchase intent through the formation of a moral image of the brand.

Cultural factors have been shown to have a great influence on the formation of ethical behavior. Values such as mutual cooperation, *For the gandong*, and collective social responsibility strengthens the moral basis of consumption in Ambon. In this case, the theory of Cultural Embeddedness (Appadurai, 2021) can explain that economic practices are never value-free, but are always tied to social and cultural structures. The difference between the context of Ambon and other large urban areas shows that ethical consumption is not universal, but contextual. In societies with communal social structures, the orientation of sustainable consumption is driven more by solidarity and social relations than by individual impulses. It enriches the global literature on economic moral diversity in developing countries.

Theoretically, this study expands the understanding of consumer behavior by integrating moral, social, and cultural dimensions within the framework of VBN and Social Identity Theory. The research also enriches the concept of "ethical consumption" with a local perspective, showing that sustainability can be rooted in community values, not just market regulation. In practical terms, these findings have implications for marketers and policymakers to develop communication strategies based on local moral values and culture. This approach has proven to be more effective in shaping sustainable consumption behavior than rational campaigns that highlight economic benefits alone.

The limitation of this study lies in the relatively small number of participants and focuses on one city, so generalizations are still limited. In

addition, phenomenological approaches tend to explore subjective meanings, so they do not explain the quantitative dimension of consumption behavior. The next research is suggested to expand the study area to other cities in Eastern Indonesia and use mixed methods to obtain a more comprehensive understanding. Longitudinal studies are also needed to see how well consumers' moral integrity lasts in the long term, especially when faced with economic pressures and global lifestyle changes.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study concludes that urban consumers' decisions to buy sustainable products are shaped by the integration of moral, social, and cultural values that interact with each other. Moral responsibility to the environment, social identity through ethical consumption, and personal integrity in market behavior are the main dimensions that explain the meaning of sustainable consumption in Ambon City. Consumers no longer view purchases as a mere economic activity, but as a moral reflection that shows concern for natural sustainability and social welfare. This awareness is strengthened by local cultural values such as mutual cooperation that fosters social solidarity and enriches the meaning of consumption ethics in the context of Eastern Indonesian society.

Theoretically, these findings broaden the understanding of consumer behavior by affirming that moral and cultural values have a strategic role in shaping ethical decisions in sustainable markets. In practical terms, this research provides implications for marketers and policymakers to design communication and branding strategies that emphasize the dimensions of social value and responsibility, not just the economic benefits of the product. Thus, sustainable consumption behavior can grow as a collective moral movement rooted in ecological and cultural awareness.

FURTHER STUDY

Avenues for further study could explore how these intertwined moral, social, and cultural values evolve across different urban contexts and demographic groups, allowing for deeper comparison beyond Ambon City. Future research may also examine how digital media, community-based initiatives, and cultural narratives shape the internalization of ethical consumption values over time. Additionally, investigating the extent to which local cultural principles—such as mutual cooperation—can be integrated into marketing interventions or public policy programs would help clarify their effectiveness in strengthening sustainable consumption. Longitudinal or mixed-method approaches could further illuminate how moral responsibility and cultural identity influence purchasing behavior in the long term and across broader market settings.

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