

A Study on the Strategic Challenges in Promoting ESG Management Adoption through Social Media Services and the Recognition of Ditto-Consumption: Focusing on Encouraging the Next Generation's Participation and Behavior

Sung Bin Jo ^{*}, Yujeong Jang ^{}, Ha Kyeong Kim ^{***},
Ye Na Shin ^{****}, Jongtae Lee ^{*****}**

Abstract This study is conducted to find out and understand the relationships between ESG awareness expansion and consumption trends. For detail, this study focuses on understanding the younger consumer's behavioral changes on ESG awareness, known as "ditto-consumption," which can be facilitated by social media usage and digital content consumption. This study examined in depth how the MZ generation perceives ESG management and how it affects their consumption behavior. As a result, the MZ generation recognized the company's ESG management as an essential element for the company's long-term survival and sustainability, not just a simple management strategy. When these ESG factors are combined, the MZ generation's brand loyalty and product purchase intention tend to increase.

Keywords Generation Z, Conjoint Analysis, ESG strategy, User Behaviors, Social Media

Submitted, December 15, 2024; 1st Revised, February 24, 2025 Accepted, February 24, 2025

^{*} Undergraduate Student, Department of Business Administration, Seoul Women's University, Seoul, Korea, castleshine0610@naver.com

^{**} Undergraduate Student, Department of Business Administration, Seoul Women's University, Seoul, Korea, clarajang0904@naver.com

^{***} Undergraduate Student, Department of Business Administration, Seoul Women's University, Seoul, Republic of Korea, hkkim0403@naver.com

^{****} Undergraduate Student, Department of Chinese Language & Literature, Seoul Women's University, Seoul, Republic of Korea, yena8090@naver.com

^{*****} Corresponding, Associate Professor, Department of Business Administration, Seoul Women's University, Seoul, Korea, light4u@swu.ac.kr



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons
Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.

I. Introduction

1. Research backgrounds and purpose

Recently, an ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) strategy has been treated as an essential agenda for various private/public organizations (Kang and Kim, 2022). Even though ESG issues seem not directly related to corporates' management and business issues, there are certain understandings that ESG strategy could stimulate the awareness of managerial advantages such as financial, emotional, and other factors (Aluchna et al., 2022). This study is conducted to find out and understand the relationships between ESG awareness expansion and consumption trends. For detail, this study focuses on understanding the younger consumer's behavioral changes on ESG awareness, known as "ditto-consumption," which can be facilitated by social media usage and digital content consumption. For the study, this study focuses on the generation called "MZ" generation in Korea who are accepted as being familiar with digital technologies (Schwieger and Ladwig, 2018; Lee and Kwon, 2022). Generally, the generation "MZ" covers Generation M in their late 20s to late 30s and Generation Z in their early 20s to late 20s in Korea, so people are aged early 20s to late 30s (or early 40s) (Kim and Kim, 2022).

To understand and find out the behavioral features toward the ESG strategy of the younger generation, this study conducted a survey targeting the young generation born in the 1980s to 2000s to ask about their consumption and digital technology usage tendencies. With the survey results, the impacts and relationships among social media platform, consumer characteristics, the delivery of messages, the spread of ESG awareness, and their consumption behaviors were examined to derive effective strategies to lead the participation of the MZ generation. Based on the results derived in this way, this study aims to present practical directions for companies to establish ESG management strategies that meet the expectations of the MZ generation.

ESG management is an essential management strategy that pursues sustainable management through three elements: environment, society, and governance (Kotsantonis et al., 2016; Aluchna et al., 2022). As diverse managerial issues such as climate change and social inequality emerge, the importance of ESG management is being emphasized more. Consumers consider a company's ESG management performance important, which increases the company's trust and customer loyalty, leading to marketing performance, while ESG strategy is commonly considered as non-financial and non-directional managerial concerns.

Also, in recent decades, 'Ditto consumption' has attracted attention as a consumption trend because of the dramatic increase in information technologies,

especially social media and communication tools, and the MZ generation's purchasing intention can be stimulated considerably by imitating influencers or content. They are accustomed to online purchases and show a consumption pattern that values social responsibility. Therefore, marketing utilizing social media and ditto consumption can be an effective ESG diffusion strategy targeting the MZ generation. This study aims to analyze the impact of social media on the MZ generation's ESG awareness and suggest effective ESG diffusion strategies based on this.

II. Research Design

1. Conceptual Definition of ESG strategy

ESG is a strategy to pursue sustainability through non-financial factors such as environment, society, and governance in corporate management. It aims to go beyond simple profit generation and have a company fulfill its social responsibility and establish a transparent governance structure to build trust with stakeholders. ESG, which developed from CSR in the past, is an approach that emphasizes environmental protection, social contribution, and establishing a transparent governance structure for companies to increase long-term value (Kazmierczak, 2022; Chang et al., 2022).

As ESG management is strengthened, the importance of society (S) and governance (G) is expanding in addition to the environment (E). For instance, ESG evaluation is established as an important criterion that contributes to corporate trust and marketing performance in various countries and corporations (Kotsantonis et al., 2016; Aluchna et al., 2022).

2. Relationship Among Social Media, Influencers, and Ditto Consumption

Social media is a digital platform for users to share their experiences and opinions in real time and interact, and it functions as a communication channel between individuals and companies in modern society (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010; Carr and Hayes, 2015). This kind of immediate information sharing is an effective means of increasing a company's brand awareness and building consumer trust. The Influence of Influencers

Influencers who have a great influence on their followers on social media provide consumers with trust by recommending products. For instance, influencer marketing has a greater influence on consumption decisions by strengthening intimacy and relevance than celebrity advertisements, and it draws

out natural favor from consumers. Kim and Lee (2024) suggest that the increasing usage of digital social media and communication tools can elaborate the impact of the influencers on the customer's intention to buy and to imitate. According to their study, Ditto Consumption is a trend of imitating the consumption choices of others which is close to the understanding of bandwagon consumption (Kang and Ma, 2020), and the phenomenon of buying products recommended by influencers is particularly prominent. Ditto consumption differs from the concept of traditional bandwagon consumption because it derives from the usage of digital technologies such as social media (as well-known as social network services). According to Kim and Lee (2024), Ditto consumption provides a sense of satisfaction by following others' choices via online communication tools rather than one's tastes and joining the trend and is becoming one of the ways of self-expression among the MZ generation who is strongly popular with SNSs. Ditto consumption relies strongly on the influence of influencers on social media such as Instagram and YouTube, and their followers make purchase decisions based on the recommendations and choices of their preferred influencers because they have a strong trust in them and feel an eagerness for social belonging through the same experience.

3. MZ Generation's ESG Management Awareness

According to previous studies, the MZ generation contributes to corporate social responsibility through consumption and shows a high interest in ESG management. It suggests that ESG activities have a great influence on their consumption decisions, and this study seeks ways to spread ESG management to the MZ generation in connection with ditto consumption. Previous studies such as Niewinska and Mual (2023) and Lee et al. (2024) on how the MZ generation perceives ESG (environment, society, governance) management provides new insights into existing consumer behavior theories and corporate management strategies. Their studies show that the MZ generation is sensitive to whether companies are fulfilling their social and environmental responsibilities and that their consumption values are different from those of previous generations. For the detailed, as environmental issues become more important, the MZ generation considers ESG management not a simple choice but an essential element.

In this sense, it should be emphasized that the MZ generation's response to companies that do not practice or consider ESG management. In this study, it is expected that a corporation's consideration on whether or not adopting ESG management may play an important strategic role in the MZ generations to decide to buy and adopt a company's products and services.

The consumption trends of the MZ generation are related to their values. They express themselves through consumption. These trends are directly related to issues such as environmental protection, social fairness, and ethical management, which leads to the result that companies that practice ESG management can achieve higher sales and brand loyalty. The MZ generation believes that their consumption contributes to strengthening the social responsibility of companies, and through this, they feel that they are also making a positive impact on society. Therefore, companies must manage their products or services as transparently as possible and use environmentally friendly methods.

The MZ generation does not simply consider low prices and good quality but the impact of the products they purchase on the environment and society. Therefore, companies need to recognize that ESG management is not a simple trend but a strategic consideration of consumer needs and practices for ESG (Roshchupkina et al., 2023). Roshchupkina et al., (2023) suggest that ESG management is not a simple marketing strategy. It also requires changes in the internal management structure of a company and the MZ generation requests transparent and ethical companies more strongly on the long-term success of a company which means the MZ (younger) generations would focus on confirming whether the corporate governance structure is fair and transparent and whether it is fulfilling its environmental and social responsibilities. So, it can be derived that, although the survey showed relatively little interest in corporate governance, it is actually an important factor linked to the reliability of a company.

This study aims to analyze the behavior of the MZ generation, focusing on 'MZ generation participation and behavior change strategies that lead to the spread of ESG awareness through social media and Ditto consumption.' Based on the above previous studies' review, this study suggests the following hypotheses:

The MZ generation has a strong awareness of environmental protection and social responsibility, which directly affects their purchasing motivation. The MZ generation, which values the social value of ESG products, will have a higher willingness to purchase when they believe that their consumption contributes to creating a better world. Lee and Park (2023) explain that the generation differences in intrinsic motivation across generations on ESG concepts can be significant and that these differences can be more for the younger generations.

Hypothesis 1. The higher the MZ generation's interest in ESG, the stronger the motivation to purchase ESG products.

The MZ generation accesses information about ESG products through social media and actively interacts with content such as comments, likes, and shares.

This strengthens communication between companies and consumers and increases awareness of ESG products. This can contribute to increasing product awareness and strengthening purchase intentions.

Hypothesis 2. The MZ generation that frequently uses social media will show higher interaction (likes, comments, shares, etc.) for ESG products.

The more frequently the MZ generation is exposed to ESG-related messages, the higher their awareness of the product and the stronger their purchase intentions. If ESG products are continuously exposed on frequently used social media platforms, it will have a positive effect on purchase behavior.

Hypothesis 3. The MZ generation that frequently uses platforms with high exposure frequency of ESG messages will have higher awareness and purchase intentions for ESG products.

The more MZ generation accesses information through influencers, advertisements, and reviews on social media, the more they trust and are willing to purchase ESG products. Repeated exposure to messages increases trust in the product and increases the likelihood of actual purchase.

Hypothesis 4. The MZ generation that frequently accesses ESG messages on social media will have stronger purchase intentions when obtaining information about ESG products through various channels (e.g., influencers, and advertisements).

III. Research Data Analysis and Results

1. Research Design

This study adopts the role of companies and ESG management awareness as viewed by the MZ generation based on a survey by the Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry(KCCI) to investigate the areas of ESG participation, preferences for eco-friendly products, and SME support policies to understand the expectations of the MZ generation and suggests ways for companies and the government to establish strategies that reflect these. Based on the insights previews, this study aims to suggest what strategies companies should prepare to meet the expectations of the MZ generation.

For the study, an online anonymous survey was conducted with the topic of ‘ESG awareness survey of the MZ generation’ in October 2024, and 103 MZ generation participants replied. The survey questions were designed to identify

how the MZ generation perceives ESG management through social media and digital content consumption. Based on this survey, we used conjoint analysis using R and R Studio. Conjoint analysis is commonly adopted to analyze the priorities and preferences among groups/individuals to make a decision along with AHP (Green and Srinivasan, 1978; Sahin, S., 2024) in business and management studies. Especially, conjoint analysis can support marketing strategies when being incorporated with simple and understandable results despite the ambiguous definition of survey attributes, and those levels would negatively affect the survey participants rather than other traditional statistical methodologies, including linear regression analysis (Rao, 2010).

To keep each survey participant's privacy, the online survey only asked two demographic information – gender and age. This study defines the MZ generation as those who were born between 1981 and 2009 (Moon & Kim, 2023).

This study adopts and revises the survey items of the Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Table 1. Brief Information of Survey Items

Survey Item	Scales	References
How much do you know about ESG concept?	1 to 5	Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry (2023)
Do you intend to purchase ESG products if all conditions including price are same with non-ESG product?	1 to 5	Tripopsakul and Puriwat (2022), Singh et al. (2024)
Do you purchase ESG products in your ordinary life?	Y / N	Tripopsakul and Puriwat (2022), Puriwat and Tripopsakul (2023)
How much do you trust the well-known ESG brands such as LUSH and Patagonia Corp.?	1 to 5	Puriwat and Tripopsakul (2023), Hou et al. (2023)
How much do you purchase the products which well-known influencers recommend?	1 to 5	Puriwat and Tripopsakul (2023), Hou et al. (2023)
Do you purchase ESG products to follow your private relationships and influencers?	Y / N	Puriwat and Tripopsakul (2023), Hou et al. (2023)
Which factor does it affect you to purchase products?	Private relationships Promotion / Discount User's Review Influencer's Recommendations Not Answered	Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry (2023), Amel-Zadeh and Serafeim (2018) Ahmed et al. (2024)
Why do you purchase ESG products in your ordinary life?	Personal responsibility awareness Following social awareness Economic values not answered	
Which topic on ESG do you take your interest on?	Product Sustainability Environment Protection Responsibility on Climate Change Social Responsibility Transparency of Corporates (Ethics) Not answered	
How much time do you use social media in a week?	None Once or twice Three to Six Times Everytime Not Answered	
Which purpose do you use social media on?	Not use Self-Expression Enjoyment	

	Information and News Communication Not Answered	
Which one do you prefer to use as your social media?	Youtube X (Twitter) Instagram Facebook Not use Not Answered	
Which topics do you prefer in social medias?	Interviews and Professional Discussion Short Movies Documentaries Infographics User Challenges Not Answered	
Which path/media do you prefer to receive ESG messages?	Private Network Broadcast and Newspaper Influencer's Recommendation Brand's Own Campaign Not Answered	
Which one do you think is the most effective among social media as ESG diffuser?	Youtube X (Twitter) Instagram Facebook Tiktok Not Answered	
Which ESG message type do you prefer to communicate with your private relationships?	Sharing via media Like and Comments Voluntary Challenges Communication with Influencers Online survey and feedback Not Answered	

Table 2. Demographic Information of Survey Participants

Attributes	Description	Numbers	Percentage
Gender	Male	48	52.4%
	Female	54	1.0%
	Refuse to answer	1	68.9%
	Total	103	100%
Ages	18~23	71	21.4%
	24~29	22	1.9%
	30~35	2	4.9%
	36~41	5	2.9%
	42~47	3	52.4%
	Total	103	100%

2. Analysis Results and Discussion

2.1 <Hypothesis 1> ESG Interest X ESG Product Purchase Motive

To analyze the survey data for hypothesis 1, this study suggests ten conditions that are required for the conjoint analysis. The suggested conditions are described in <Table 3>.

Table 3. Conjoint Analysis Design for Hypothesis 1

Attributes	Description
Pref 1	Interest score 3(neutral) on ESG, and they usually purchase ESG products because of the brand's positive social contribution
Pref 2	Interest score 2(little low) on ESG, and they usually purchase ESG products because of social awareness
Pref 3	Interest score 4(little high) on ESG, and they usually purchase ESG products because of economic benefits
Pref 4	Interest score 1(very low) on ESG, and they usually purchase ESG products because of economic benefits
Pref 5	Interest score 2(little low) on ESG, and they usually purchase ESG products because of their friends' or acquaintances' behaviors
Pref 6	Interest score 4(little high) on ESG, and they usually purchase ESG products because of the brand's positive social contribution
Pref 7	Interest score 3(neutral) on ESG, and they usually purchase ESG products because of their individual responsibility on protecting the environment
Pref 8	Interest score 1(very low) on ESG, and they usually purchase ESG products because of the brand's positive social contribution
Pref 9	Interest score 1(very low) on ESG, and they usually purchase ESG products because of social awareness
Pref 10	Interest score 5(very high) on ESG, and they usually purchase ESG products because of the brand's positive social contribution

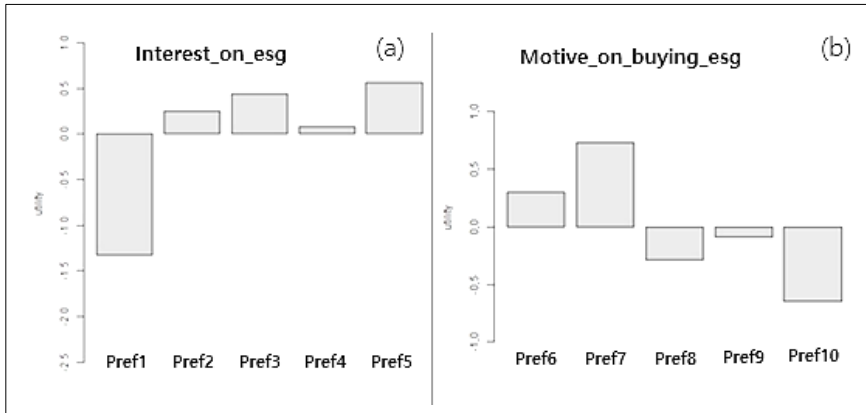


Figure 1. Conjoint Analysis Result for Hypothesis 1

<Figure 1-(a)> shows the preferences (utility) of people with different levels of interest in ESG. In the case of Pref 1, it showed the lowest utility, but people with relatively low interest, such as Pref 5, showed positive utility. These results show that high interest in ESG does not always lead to high preference. For example, even if a person is highly interested in ESG, if the product does not provide economic benefits to them, their interest may decrease. On the other hand, people with low interest in ESG may show a higher preference for the product if a certain message suits them. In conclusion, it suggests that interest in ESG is not the only factor that determines preference, and that purchase motivation, personal circumstances, and the perception of the message all work together.

<Figure 1-(b)> shows how preference changes depending on the purchase motivation of ESG products. People who consider personal responsibility for environmental protection as their purchase motivation, such as Pref 7, showed the highest utility, but people who consider a brand social contribution as their purchase motivation, such as Pref 10, showed relatively low preference. These results show that personal motivations have a significant impact on the purchase of ESG products and that brands may not be able to fully satisfy consumers' purchasing motivations simply by emphasizing social contributions.

In summary, interest in ESG and product purchasing motivations each have a complex effect on preference, and simply having a high interest in ESG does not necessarily lead to higher preference, nor does a brand's social contributions alone satisfy all consumers' purchasing motivations.

2.2 <Hypothesis 2> Frequency of social media use X How to interact with acquaintances about ESG messages through social media

To analyze the survey data for hypothesis 1, this study suggests ten conditions that are required for the conjoint analysis. The suggested conditions are described in <Table 3>.

Table 4. Conjoint Analysis Design for Hypothesis 2

Attributes	Description
Pref 1	Active social media user (daily), who thinks likes and comments are the best way to interact with ESG messages
Pref 2	Moderate social media user (3-6 times a week), who thinks likes and comments are the best way to interact with ESG messages
Pref 3	Occasional social media user (1-2 times a week), who thinks likes and comments are the best way to interact with ESG messages
Pref 4	Non-user of social media, who thinks likes and comments are the best way to interact with ESG messages
Pref 5	Active social media user (daily), who thinks sharing (retweeting, program) is the best way to interact with ESG messages
Pref 6	Moderate social media user (3-6 times a week), who thinks sharing (retweeting, program) is the best way to interact with ESG messages
Pref 7	Occasionally Users (1-2 times a week), those who think sharing (retweet, regram) is the best way to interact with ESG messages
Pref 8	Non-users of social media, those who think sharing (retweeting, program) is the best way to interact with ESG messages
Pref 9	Active users of social media (daily), those who think participating in challenges is the best way to interact with ESG messages

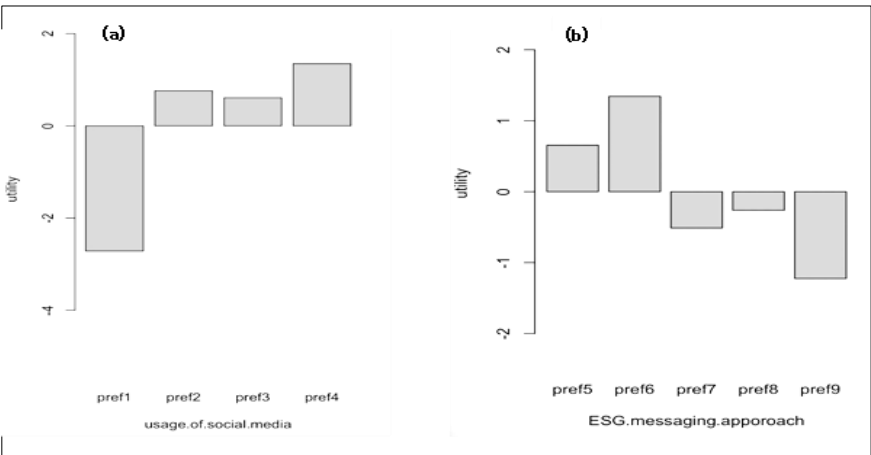


Figure 2. Conjoint Analysis Result for Hypothesis 2

<Figure 2-(a)> shows the utility according to the frequency of social media use and the interaction method for ESG messages. Pref 1 is a user who uses social media daily and prefers likes and comments, and they showed the lowest utility. This indicates that they are not satisfied with ESG messages despite being active users of social media. On the other hand, among those who use social media daily, such as Pref 5, those who interact by sharing (retweet, regram) showed the highest preference, which can be interpreted as the method of actively spreading messages through sharing leading to a positive response.

<Figure 2-(b)> shows the difference in utility according to the interaction method with ESG messages. Users who use social media moderately, such as Pref 6, and prefer to share messages showed the highest preference, indicating that the sharing method is effective in leading to positive interactions with ESG messages. However, users who use social media occasionally, such as Pref 7, and non-users, such as Pref 8, showed negative values. This indicates that they have a somewhat negative attitude toward the sharing method. In addition, users who use social media daily but prefer to participate in challenges, like Pref 9, also show negative utility values, suggesting that the challenge participation method may not be the best interaction method for delivering ESG messages.

As a result, preferences for ESG messages vary depending on the frequency of social media use and the interaction method. For instance, although the sharing method can elicit relatively positive preferences compared to likes and comments, the overall preference may be negative, indicating that the content of ESG messages may not be positive for everyone. In addition, the challenge participation method may be an inefficient method because it shows somewhat negative reactions from active users. Therefore, strategies for promoting ESG messages and products require a customized approach that matches social media usage patterns and preferred interaction methods.

2.3 <Hypothesis 3> Social media usage platform X ESG in daily life
Message exposure frequency

Table 5. Conjoint Analysis Design for Hypothesis 3

Attributes	Description
Pref 1	Instagram as a social media platform, ESG message exposure frequency not exposed at all
Pref 2	TikTok as a social media platform, ESG message exposure frequency Not exposed at all
Pref 3	YouTube as a social media platform, ESG message exposure frequency Not exposed at all
Pref 4	Instagram as a social media platform, ESG message exposure frequency 0~2 times a week
Pref 5	TikTok as a social media platform, ESG message exposure frequency 0~2 times a week
Pref 6	YouTube as a social media platform, ESG message exposure frequency 0~2 times a week
Pref 7	Instagram as a social media platform, ESG message exposure frequency 3 times or more a week
Pref 8	TikTok usage, ESG message exposure frequency in daily life 3 times or more per week

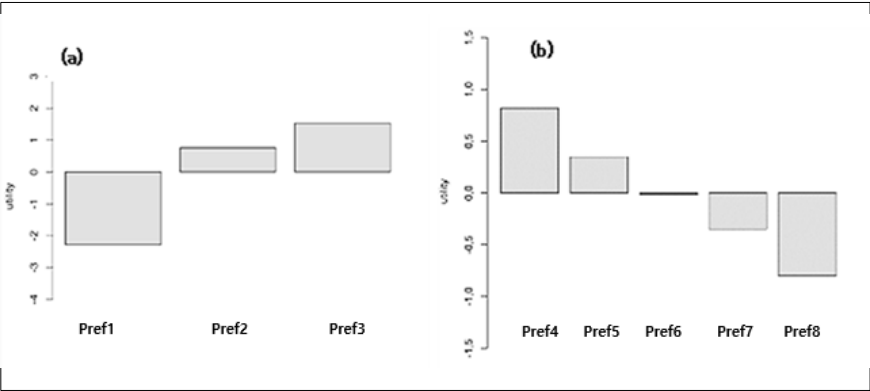


Figure 3. Conjoint Analysis Result for Hypothesis 3

<Figure 3-(a)> shows the user utility according to the exposure of ESG messages by social media platforms. The graph shows that the utility values of users differ when ESG messages are not exposed at all by the platform, regardless of the frequency of social media use. Instagram users, despite being daily users of social media, showed the lowest utility when ESG messages were not exposed at all. This means that even active users of social media may have low satisfaction when ESG messages are absent. On the other hand, TikTok

users showed relatively neutral responses, indicating that TikTok users may not show a strong response to ESG messages. In the case of YouTube, the utility values showed a positive response even when ESG messages were not exposed, which can be seen as reflecting the high satisfaction of users with the platform itself, separate from ESG messages.

<Figure 3-(b)> shows the utility differences according to the frequency of exposure to ESG messages. Among Instagram users, the utility value tends to increase when ESG messages are exposed at an appropriate frequency, which means that users can positively accept ESG message exposure that is not too excessive. However, when ESG messages are exposed more than three times a week, negative utility values are observed for both Instagram and TikTok users. This suggests that users may feel tired or rejected if ESG messages are exposed too frequently. For instance, TikTok users showed the most negative reactions as the message frequency increased, which shows that excessive exposure to ESG messages on the platform is more likely to have a negative effect. Based on these results, it can be seen that reactions to ESG messages vary greatly depending on the social media platform and that appropriate exposure frequency and interaction method have a great influence. Instagram and TikTok users positively accept ESG messages at an appropriate frequency, but may react negatively if exposed too frequently. On the other hand, YouTube is a platform that is relatively less affected by exposure to ESG messages, and user satisfaction is relatively regardless of message exposure. Therefore, when establishing an ESG message strategy through social media, a customized approach is needed that takes into account the usage patterns and preferences of users of each platform. Excessive exposure to messages can actually have the opposite effect, so it is important to deliver messages with appropriate frequency and method. For instance, platforms such as TikTok should avoid frequent message exposure, while YouTube can be approached in a relatively freer manner.

2.4 <Hypothesis 4> Social media usage frequency X ESG message delivery path

Table 6. Conjoint Analysis Design for Hypothesis 4

Attributes	Description
Pref 1	Active social media user (daily), direct referral from influencer
Pref 2	Moderate social media user (3-6 times a week), direct referral from influencer
Pref 3	Moderate social media user (1-2 times a week), direct referral from influencer
Pref 4	Non-user of social media, direct referral from influencer
Pref 5	Active social media user (daily), brand's own campaign
Pref 6	Moderate social media user (3-6 times a week), brand's own campaign
Pref 7	Moderate social media user (1-2 times a week), brand's own
Pref 8	Non-user of social media, brand's own campaign
Pref 9	Active social media user (daily), user reviews and feedback

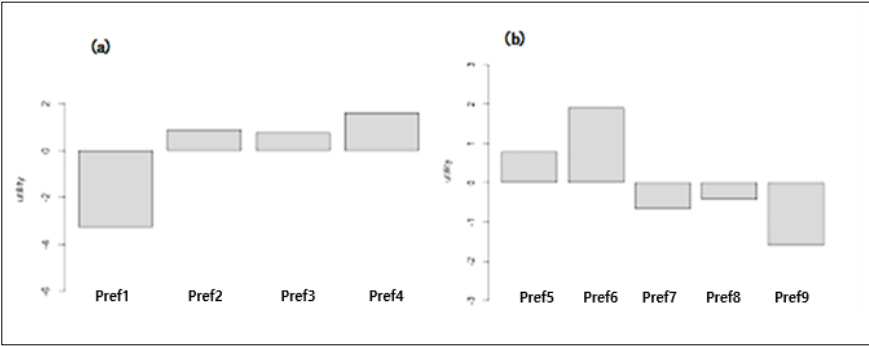


Figure 4. Conjoint Analysis Result for Hypothesis 4

<Figure 4-(a)> shows the effects according to the frequency of social media use and the method of ESG message delivery (influencer recommendation). In the case of active users of social media, such as Pref 1, the utility value is negative. In other words, it can be seen that they react negatively to the influencer's recommendations. On the other hand, non-users of social media, such as Pref 4, react positively to recommendations through influencers. This shows that the higher the frequency of social media use, the less effective ESG message delivery through influencers is, and it has a positive effect on non-users.

<Figure 4-(b)> shows the reactions to the method of ESG message delivery (brand-specific campaign, user review). Pref 5 and 6 are active and moderate users of social media, and they reacted positively to the brand-specific campaign. For instance, moderate users of Pref 6 showed the highest utility. However, active users of Pref 9 showed negative utility values, indicating that they reacted negatively to message delivery through user reviews.

In conclusion, these two graphs show that the effectiveness of ESG message delivery varies depending on the frequency of social media use. Influencer recommendations are more effective for non-users, and brand-specific campaigns usually elicit positive responses from users. On the other hand, user reviews may be less effective for active social media users in terms of ESG message delivery. In other words, we can see that differentiated ESG message delivery strategies tailored to different user characteristics are needed.

3. Research Results

The MZ generation recognizes ESG management as an essential element and is sensitive to the social and environmental responsibilities of companies. Since they consider social impact in addition to the price and quality of products, companies that practice ESG management are more likely to achieve higher sales and brand loyalty. Therefore, companies should set sustainability as one of their goals and establish management strategies that meet the expectations of the MZ generation.

The results of the conjoint analysis show that interest in ESG and product purchase motivation have a complex effect on preference. It was confirmed that high interest in ESG does not necessarily lead to high preference and that the brand's social contribution alone cannot lead to purchase motivation for all consumers. In addition, preferences for ESG messages vary depending on the frequency of social media use and interaction methods, so while a positive sharing method may be effective, it does not have the same impact on all users.

ESG message responses vary depending on the social media platform, and on Instagram and TikTok, messages with an appropriate frequency elicit positive responses, but excessive exposure leads to negative responses. YouTube is less sensitive to exposure frequency and shows stable user satisfaction. In addition, it is emphasized that a differentiated message strategy tailored to the characteristics of social media users is necessary, and an approach tailored to user characteristics is important in order to effectively deliver ESG messages.

IV. Conclusion

1. Research Summary

This study examined in depth how the MZ generation perceives ESG management and how it affects their consumption behavior. As a result, the MZ generation recognized the company's ESG management as an essential element for the company's long-term survival and sustainability, not just a simple management strategy. They particularly valued the company's environmental

responsibility, which is closely related to the reality that climate change and environmental issues are emerging as major global agendas. In addition, the MZ generation also views the company's social contribution and transparency of its governance structure as important evaluation factors, and it was confirmed that this greatly affects the company's reliability and brand image. When these ESG factors are combined, the MZ generation's brand loyalty and product purchase intention tend to increase.

In addition, this study found that social media is acting as a major channel for delivering ESG messages to the MZ generation. The MZ generation easily accesses ESG-related products or campaigns promoted by influencers through social media, and through this, they feel satisfied that they are also participating in ESG values. For instance, when influencers recommend products based on their own experiences or repeatedly deliver messages emphasizing the company's social responsibility, the MZ generation is more likely to increase their trust in the product and make a purchase decision.

2. Academic and Practical Implications

This study provided several strategic implications for companies to communicate with the MZ generation and spread ESG management. First, authentic ESG management practices are essential. The MZ generation does not place much value on simple marketing campaigns or superficial promotion of ESG management, and they value whether the company actually practices social responsibility and environmental protection. Therefore, companies need to systematically practice ESG activities and clearly show how these activities are being implemented in the company's operations. This authenticity is an important factor in gaining the trust of the MZ generation and building long-term brand loyalty.

Second, delivering ESG messages through social media is a very effective strategy. Unlike other generations, the MZ generation acquires information through social media and is greatly influenced by messages delivered by influencers or friends there. Therefore, companies need to appropriately communicate their ESG management practices through social media, and especially actively spread messages on platforms that the MZ generation uses a lot (Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, etc.). Collaboration with influencers plays a very important role in this process, and can naturally convey stories related to the authenticity of products or campaigns.

Third, it is effective to utilize the Ditto Consumption pattern. The MZ generation tends to imitate the consumption patterns of influencers or people around them, and this can have a positive effect on the spread of ESG products or campaigns. Companies should consider this point and plan campaigns that can induce active consumer participation on social media. For example, a

challenge-style marketing strategy can be considered in which users spread ESG messages by sharing or recommending their experiences after using eco-friendly products.

3. Research limitations and Future Study Suggestions.

This study collected data through a survey and conjoint analysis to analyze the MZ generation's perception of ESG management, but there are several limitations.

First, the limitations of the survey sample. The sample of this study may not represent the entire MZ generation and may be biased toward respondents from certain regions or social backgrounds which factors were not considered in this study. In addition, the concept of the MZ generation is still under clear understanding in academic terms due to vague definitions and age differences. This suggests that there are limitations in generalizing the trends of the entire MZ generation when interpreting the results.

Second, there is a limitation in the research scenario. The scenario used in the survey may not fully reflect the various consumption situations that the MZ generation actually faces. Since awareness of ESG management and product purchase behavior are influenced by complex factors, additional variables in addition to the attributes covered in this study may play an important role in real situations.

Third, there is the rapid change of social media. Social media is a platform that changes very quickly, and current influencer trends and user participation methods may also change. Therefore, additional research that continuously reflects these changes is necessary. This will provide deeper insight into how ESG message delivery through social media can evolve.

Fourth, this study designs survey items referring to the practical survey of KCCI mainly as a follow-up study of KCCI's strategic report. It means, the survey items may lack academic foundation and support despite several related academic references also considered during the designing process of the survey items. Furthermore, conjoint analysis methodology has a vulnerability as mentioned earlier – the complexity of the survey participants' understanding of the survey items. Because the studies on ESG products rather than ESG strategies and activities are still at earlier stages, future studies should consider designing surveys with more concrete academic considerations.

This study shows that ESG management has a significant impact on the consumption behavior of the MZ generation and that strategies utilizing social media and ditto consumption patterns can be effective in spreading ESG messages. Companies need to closely analyze their consumption patterns and social media usage to combine genuine ESG practices with effective marketing

strategies. This will enable them to continuously communicate with the MZ generation and build long-term brand trust and loyalty.

Acknowledgment

It was completely reorganized and carried out based on the research results of the KMAC Management Innovation Contest.

References

- Ahmed, B., El-Gohary, H., Khan, R., Gul, M.A., Hussain, A., and Shar, S.M.A., (2024), The Influence of Behavioral and ESG Drivers on Consumer Intentions for Online Fashion Renting: A Pathway Toward Sustainable Consumption in China's Fashion Industry, *Sustainability*, 16, 97723. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16229723>.
- Aluchna, M., Roszkowska-Menkes, M., and Kaminski, B., (2022), *Meditari Accountancy Research*, 31(7), 1-25.
- Amel-Zadeh, A., and Serafeim, G., (2018), Why and How Investors Use ESG Information: Evidence from a Global Survey, *Standards, Ethics, and Regulation*, 74(3), 87-103.
- Carr, C.T. and Hayes, R.A., (2015), Social Media: Defining, Developing, and Divining, *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 24(1), 46-65.
- Chang, X., Fu, K., Jin, Y., and Liem, P.F., (2022), Sustainable Finance: ESG/CSR, Firm Value, and Investment Returns, *Asia-Pacific Journal of Financial Studies*, 51(3), 325-371.
- Green, P.E. and Srinivasan, V., (1978), Conjoint Analysis in Consumer Research: Issues and Outlook, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 5(2), 103-123.
- Hou, J., Du, M., and Zhou, Q. (2023). What People Talk About Multi-Channel Purchasing Behavior and What They Intend to do: Related Perspective From ESG Evaluation System. *Sage Open*, 13(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231206970>
- Kang, I. and Ma, I., (2020), A Study on Bandwagon Consumption Behavior Based on Fear of Missing Out and Product Characteristics, *Sustainability*, 12(6), e2441
- Kang, Y.J. and Kim, S.H., (2022), *Journal of the Korea Convergence Society*, 13(4), 233-244.
- Kaplan, A.M. and Haenlein, M., (2010), Users of the World, Unite! The Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media, *Business Horizons*, 53, 59-68.
- Kazmierczak, M., (2022), A Literature Review on the Difference Between CSR and ESG, *Scientific Papers of Silesian University of Technology, Organization and Management Series* 162, 275-289.
- Kim, J. and Choi, E., (2024), The Effect of Beauty Shop Service Quality on Revisit Intention, *Protection Convergence*, 9(1), 14-24.
- Kim, E.K. and Kim, J.E., (2022), A Study on Changes in Body Shape of MZ Generation (2030s) Women for Clothing Construction – Focused on the 7th and 8th Korea's Anthropometric Data, *Journal of the Korea Fashion and Costume Design Association*, 24(3), 111-125 (In Korean Language).
- Kotsantonis, S., Pinney, C., Serafeim, G., (2016), ESG Integration in Investment Management: Myths and Realities, *Journal of Applied Corporate Finance*, 28(2), 10-16.
- Lee, C.C., Luppi, J.L., Simmons, T., Tran, B., and Zhang, R., (2024), Examining the Impacts of ESG on Employee Retention: A Study of Generational Differences, *Journal of Business and Management*, 29(1), 1-22.
- Lee, J. and Kwon, K.H., (2022), Why is Generation MZ Passionate about Good Consumption of K-Cosmetics Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic?, *Journal of Cosmetic*

- Dermatology, 21(8), 3208-3218.
- Lee, C.C. and Park, S., (2023), Impact of ESG on Employees; Intrinsic Motivation Across Generations, *Korea Review of International Studies*, 16(50), 96-119.
- Moon, S. and Kim, Y., (2023), Subjective Perceptions of 'Meaning of Work' of Generation MZ employees of South Korean NGOs, *Behavioral Sciences*, 13(6), 461; <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs13060461>.
- Niewinska, K. and Mual, M., (2023), What Modern Generation Z Really is Like – Stock Market Investment Strategies and ESG, *Scientific Papers of Silesian University of Technology, Organization and Management Series*, 184, 393-407.
- Puriwat W. and Tripopsakul, S., (2023), Sustainability Matters: Unravelling the Power of ESG in Fostering Brand Love and Loyalty across Generations and Product Involvements, *Sustainability*, 15(15) 11578: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su151511578>.
- Rao, V.R., (2010), Conjoint Analysis. In *Wiley International Encyclopedia of Marketing* (eds J. Sheth and N. Malhotra). <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444316568.wiem02019>.
- Roshchupkina, V., Khakirov, A., Manuylenko, V., Gryzunova, N., Koniagina, M., and Ermakova, G., (2023), Entrepreneurial Activity of Generation Z: Motives, Algorithms for Starting a Business, *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, 11(11), e1331.
- Sahin, S., (2024), Utilizing AHP and Conjoint Analysis in Educational Research: Characteristics of a good mathematical problem, *Education and Information Technology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-024-12830-9>.
- Schwieger, D. and Aldwig, C., (2018), Reaching and Retaining the Next Generation: Adapting to the Expectations of Gen Z in the Classroom, 16(3), 45-54.
- Singh, S., Verma, R., Fatima, A., and Kumar, M., (2024). Building Brand Reputation and Fostering Customer Loyalty Through ESG Practices: A Strategic Imperative for Competitive Advantage. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3880-3.ch012>.
- Tripopsakul, S., and Puriwat, W., (2022), Understanding the Impact of ESG on Brand Trust and Customer Engagement, *Journal of Human, Earth, and Future*, 3(4), 430-440.