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Indatu Journal of Management and Accounting

Vol. 4, No. 1, 2026

Modeling Circular Economy Behavior: The Influence of Brand Activism and Environmental Awareness on Green Repurchase Intention

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Article History

Received 27 March 2026
Revised 21 May 2026
Accepted 28 May 2026
Available Online 5 June 2026

Keywords:
Brand activism
Environmental awareness
Circular economy behavior
Green repurchase intention
Sustainable consumption
Banda Aceh
Aceh Besar

Abstract

This study investigates the influence of Brand Activism and Environmental Awareness on Green Repurchase Intention, with Circular Economy Behavior as a mediating variable. The study addresses the persistent attitude–behavior gap in sustainable consumption, whereby consumers often express environmental concern but do not consistently engage in green repurchasing behavior. A quantitative associative approach was employed using data collected from consumers in Banda Aceh City and Aceh Besar Regency, Indonesia, through structured questionnaires. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results reveal that Brand Activism and Environmental Awareness positively and significantly influence Circular Economy Behavior. Circular Economy Behavior also demonstrates the strongest positive effect on Green Repurchase Intention, emerging as the most dominant predictor in the model. In addition, Brand Activism directly and positively affects Green Repurchase Intention, whereas Environmental Awareness shows a negative but significant direct effect, indicating that environmental awareness alone does not necessarily encourage repeated green purchasing. The mediation analysis further reveals that Circular Economy Behavior acts as an important behavioral pathway linking environmental values and brand-related factors with sustainable repurchase behavior. The indirect effects also indicate that Circular Economy Behavior strengthens the influence of Brand Activism and Environmental Awareness on Green Repurchase Intention by translating environmental values and brand-related stimuli into consistent sustainable consumption practices. These findings suggest that sustainable repurchase behavior is primarily shaped by actual behavioral engagement rather than cognitive awareness alone. This study contributes to the sustainable consumer behavior literature by emphasizing the role of Circular Economy Behavior as a key mediating mechanism within the circular economy framework. The findings also suggest that companies and policymakers should focus on encouraging sustainable behavioral practices rather than relying solely on environmental awareness campaigns.

1. Introduction

The accelerating pace of environmental degradation has compelled policymakers, academics, and business practitioners to fundamentally reconsider prevailing models of production and consumption [1, 2]. The circular economy paradigm has emerged as one of the most structurally significant responses to this challenge by proposing a systemic shift away from the linear "take-

make-dispose" model toward cyclical resource flows that minimize waste, maximize value retention, and decouple economic activity from natural resource depletion [3, 4]. The green economy therefore represents not merely an environmental aspiration but also a comprehensive pathway toward global sustainability that demands behavioral transformation at every level of the consumption chain [5]. Within this transformation, the behavior of individual consumers occupies a pivotal position because, without sustained demand-side engagement, the institutional and supply-side architecture of the circular economy remains structurally incomplete [6].

Despite the growing institutional momentum behind sustainability transitions, consumer behavior has proven resistant to alignment with circular economy principles. A major survey of European Union businesses identified lack of consumer interest and awareness as the primary barrier to circular economy adoption, while previous studies consistently document that economic considerations continue to dominate purchasing decisions, with consumers often preferring cheaper products despite their negative environmental consequences [7]. Of particular concern is the persistently low level of Green Repurchase Intention, defined as consumers' willingness to repeatedly choose environmentally preferable products over conventional alternatives. Although initial green purchases may be stimulated by novelty, promotional campaigns, or social pressure, sustaining repurchase behavior requires a qualitatively different constellation of motivations [3, 8]. This gap between one-time green purchasing and habitual sustainable consumption constitutes one of the most pressing empirical challenges in sustainable consumer behavior research, with direct implications for corporate profitability and the long-term viability of circular economy business models [9].

In response to the persistent gap between environmental concern and sustainable purchasing behavior, scholars have increasingly examined external factors capable of encouraging greener consumption practices. Among these factors, Brand Activism has attracted substantial scholarly and managerial attention. Brand Activism refers to a firm's proactive and authentic engagement with social, environmental, or political causes that extend beyond its immediate commercial interests, positioning the brand not merely as a product provider but also as an agent of societal change [10]. Within sustainable marketing, Brand Activism functions as a credibility signal that differentiates genuine environmental commitment from superficial greenwashing, thereby reducing consumer skepticism and strengthening brand-consumer identification [11]. Nguyen et al. [12] empirically demonstrated that Generation Z consumers' perceptions of Brand Activism exert a significant positive influence on brand loyalty, thereby establishing a measurable behavioral outcome that extends beyond attitudinal preference. Gutiérrez et al. [9] further reinforced this argument by developing a brand value measurement model from a corporate social responsibility perspective and finding that consumers' perceptions of a brand's social and environmental engagement constitute a meaningful component of overall brand equity across diverse cultural contexts. However, the specific mechanism through which Brand Activism shapes Green Repurchase Intention, as distinct from general brand loyalty or one-time purchase behavior, remains empirically underexplored, representing a critical gap addressed in this study.

Beyond external brand-related influences, sustainable consumption behavior is also strongly associated with consumers' internal cognitive and moral considerations. In this regard, Environmental Awareness, defined as an individual's cognitive recognition of ecological problems combined with a sense of personal responsibility toward environmental outcomes, has long been theorized as a foundational antecedent of pro-environmental behavior. In the Indonesian context, Prabowo [10] found that Environmental Awareness among consumers of The Body Shop significantly influenced Green Purchase Intention, although this relationship was conditioned by the presence of strong brand image signals, suggesting that awareness alone may be insufficient without brand-level reinforcement. Similarly, Alamsyah et al. [13] confirmed that green awareness mediates the relationship between advertising exposure and Green Purchase Intention. These findings are consistent with international evidence reported by Ogiemwonyi [8], whose cross-national comparative study concluded that although Environmental Awareness consistently emerges as a significant predictor of green behavior, its effect size varies substantially across cultural and institutional contexts. At the aggregate level, it reported that 61% of the global population has yet to meaningfully adopt sustainable consumption practices despite high levels of stated environmental concern, reflecting the widely documented attitude–behavior gap that remains one of the central theoretical issues in the sustainable consumer behavior literature [13].

To explain the relationship between environmental cognition, behavioral orientation, and sustainable repurchasing decisions, this study is grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). TPB proposes that individual behavior is primarily influenced by behavioral

intention, which is shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control [14]. Within the context of sustainable consumption, Environmental Awareness reflects consumers' cognitive attitudes toward environmental issues, whereas Circular Economy Behavior represents the behavioral manifestation of these attitudes in everyday consumption practices [15, 16]. Brand Activism functions as an external stimulus capable of strengthening consumers' value alignment and behavioral intention toward environmentally responsible consumption. Therefore, TPB provides an appropriate theoretical foundation for explaining how Environmental Awareness and brand-related factors influence Green Repurchase Intention through Circular Economy Behavior [17].

Although brand-related and cognitive factors are important, previous studies suggest that sustainable repurchase intention is often formed through actual behavioral engagement. Accordingly, within the structural framework of this study, Circular Economy Behavior is positioned as a critical mediating construct linking Brand Activism and Environmental Awareness to Green Repurchase Intention. Circular Economy Behavior encompasses the range of consumer actions consistent with circular economy principles, including product reuse, preference for durable and repairable goods, and rejection of single-use alternatives. Prasetya [18] documented how Generation Z consumers in Indonesia increasingly orient their purchasing decisions around green marketing signals, suggesting that circular economy-aligned behavior is not a fixed disposition but rather a context-sensitive response to brand-related and cognitive stimuli. Sari et al. [19] extended this argument by finding that green self-identity and epistemic value positively influence Green Purchase Intention among Generation Z consumers in Palembang, although the conversion of awareness into consistent repurchase behavior remained dependent on social and contextual value factors. Minbashrazgah et al. [20] further demonstrated that behavioral intentions are shaped by the interaction of functional and normative factors, implying the need for structural models capable of capturing multi-stage behavioral pathways rather than direct attitude–intention relationships alone. Nevertheless, the mediating role of Circular Economy Behavior in connecting upstream motivational factors to downstream repurchase outcomes has received limited direct empirical attention, representing one of the most substantive gaps in the current literature [21].

A review of previous studies reveals several important research gaps. Existing studies have primarily examined Brand Activism and Environmental Awareness as direct predictors of Green Purchase Intention or brand loyalty, whereas limited attention has been devoted to their roles in shaping Green Repurchase Intention through Circular Economy Behavior [9, 12, 22]. In addition, most studies have treated Circular Economy Behavior as an outcome variable rather than as a mediating behavioral mechanism linking cognitive and brand-related factors to sustainable repurchasing decisions. Empirical evidence from emerging-market and nonmetropolitan contexts, particularly Banda Aceh and Aceh Besar, also remains limited.

This study contributes to the sustainable consumer behavior literature in three important ways. First, it integrates Brand Activism, Environmental Awareness, Circular Economy Behavior, and Green Repurchase Intention into a single structural framework grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior. Second, it positions Circular Economy Behavior as a mediating mechanism through which environmental values and brand-related stimuli are translated into sustainable repurchase behavior. Third, the study provides empirical evidence from an emerging market context in Indonesia, thereby extending the existing literature on circular economy behavior beyond highly urbanized settings.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Data Collection

This study employed a quantitative associative research design to examine the relationships among Brand Activism (BA), Environmental Awareness (EA), Circular Economy Behavior (CEB), and Green Repurchase Intention (GRI). Data were collected from residents of Banda Aceh City and Aceh Besar Regency, Indonesia, between January and February 2026 [23, 24].

The study population comprised consumers residing in Banda Aceh City and Aceh Besar Regency, with a combined population of 761,614 individuals, consisting of 267,736 residents in Banda Aceh City [23] and 493,878 residents in Aceh Besar Regency [24]. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 95 percent confidence level and a 10 percent margin of error, resulting in a minimum sample requirement of 100 respondents.

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree). Prior to completing the questionnaire, respondents were informed of the study objectives and assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses [25].

The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software [26, 27].

2.2. Measurement of Variables

Brand Activism (BA) was measured using four indicators that reflect the extent to which a brand actively engages in environmental and social issues. These indicators include the brand's commitment to environmental causes, the authenticity of its social initiatives, the consistency of its sustainability values, and its involvement in tangible environmental and social programs [9, 12].

Environmental Awareness (EA) was measured using four indicators representing individuals' cognitive and affective understanding of environmental issues. These indicators include awareness of the environmental impact of consumption, knowledge of environmental problems, a sense of personal responsibility toward environmental protection, and concern for environmental sustainability [10].

Circular Economy Behavior (CEB) was operationalized as a mediating variable and measured using four indicators reflecting environmentally responsible consumption behaviors aligned with circular economy principles. These indicators include a preference for durable and repairable products, product reuse behavior, avoidance of single-use products, and the consistent selection of environmentally friendly products [18–20].

Green Repurchase Intention (GRI) was measured using four indicators that capture consumers' intentions to repeatedly engage in environmentally responsible purchasing behavior. These indicators include the intention to repurchase green products in the future, willingness to prioritize green products over conventional alternatives, intention to recommend green products to others, and long-term commitment to purchasing environmentally friendly products [7].

2.3. Analytical Procedure and Study

To ensure methodological rigor and analytical transparency, this study followed a structured analytical procedure commonly employed in PLS-SEM research. The process began with the development of a structured questionnaire based on validated theoretical constructs related to Brand Activism, Environmental Awareness, Circular Economy Behavior, and Green Repurchase Intention [25]. The questionnaire was administered to respondents residing in Banda Aceh City and Aceh Besar Regency. Following data collection, the dataset was screened to identify incomplete responses and assess data suitability. Descriptive statistical analysis was then conducted to summarize respondent characteristics and examine the distribution of the data [28].

Subsequently, the measurement model (outer model) was evaluated to assess the validity and reliability of the constructs through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability tests, in accordance with established PLS-SEM guidelines. After confirming the adequacy of the measurement model, the structural model (inner model) was assessed by estimating path coefficients, evaluating the coefficient of determination (R^2), and examining the mediating role of Circular Economy Behavior in the relationships between Brand Activism, Environmental Awareness, and Green Repurchase Intention [25, 29].

Hypothesis testing was performed using a bootstrapping procedure to obtain t-values and p-values, enabling robust statistical inference without requiring distributional assumptions. Both direct and indirect effects were examined to evaluate the significance of the proposed relationships. Finally, the findings were interpreted and discussed in light of relevant theoretical perspectives on sustainable consumption, the circular economy, and green consumer behavior, as well as prior empirical studies [30].

2.4. Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS)

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) is a variance-based multivariate analytical technique that enables the simultaneous examination of complex relationships among latent constructs measured by multiple indicators [28]. PLS-SEM is particularly suitable for predictive research, exploratory theory development, and studies involving mediating relationships because it does not require strict assumptions regarding data normality and can be effectively applied to relatively small sample sizes [8]. Furthermore, PLS-SEM enables the simultaneous assessment of measurement and structural models, thereby providing a comprehensive evaluation of both construct quality and hypothesized relationships.

In this study, PLS-SEM was employed to analyze the relationships among Brand Activism (BA), Environmental Awareness (EA), Circular Economy Behavior (CEB), and Green Repurchase Intention (GRI). This approach was selected because of its ability to estimate complex causal relationships while simultaneously assessing both direct and indirect effects within a single analytical framework. Specifically, CEB was modeled as a mediating variable linking BA and EA to GRI [25].

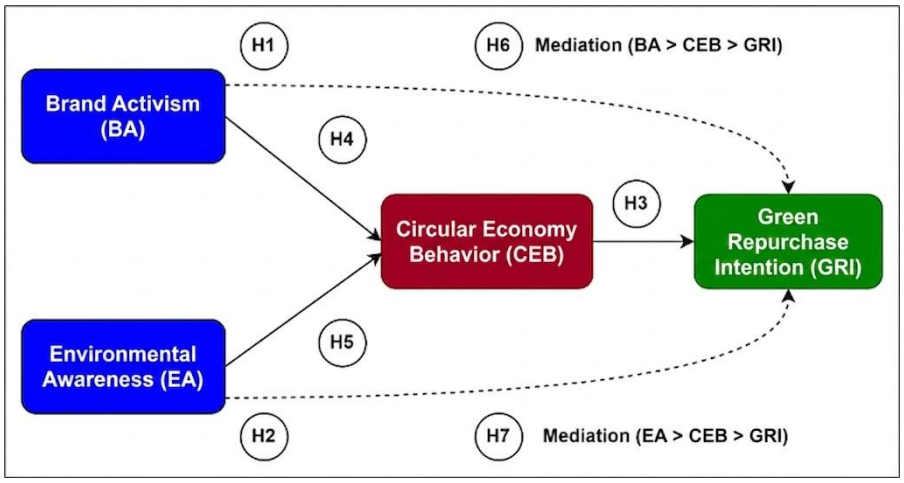

Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics.

Variable Path	Mean	Std. Dev.
BA → CEB	0.491	0.088
EA → CEB	0.491	0.090
CEB → GRI	0.765	0.045
BA → GRI	0.330	0.029
EA → GRI	-0.087	0.041

2.5. Structural Model Specification and Construct Equations

The structural model was specified to examine the direct and indirect relationships among Brand Activism (BA), Environmental Awareness (EA), Circular Economy Behavior (CEB), and Green Repurchase Intention (GRI). In the proposed model, Circular Economy Behavior was conceptualized as a mediating variable through which Brand Activism and Environmental Awareness influence Green Repurchase Intention. Based on the conceptual framework, the following structural equations were formulated in accordance with established PLS-SEM procedures [25, 28]. Accordingly, the structural relationships are specified in Equations 1 and 2.

$$CEB_i = \beta_1 BA_i + \beta_2 EA_i + \zeta_{1i} \quad (1)$$

$$GRI_i = \beta_3 BA_i + \beta_4 EA_i + \beta_5 CEB_i + \zeta_{2i} \quad (2)$$

Where *CEB* represents Circular Economy Behavior, *GRI* denotes Green Repurchase Intention, *BA* refers to Brand Activism, *EA* denotes Environmental Awareness, β represents the estimated path coefficients, and ζ represents the error term.

2.6. Conceptual Framework and Research Hypotheses

Based on the proposed conceptual framework and the relevant literature, this study develops seven hypotheses. The conceptual framework and the proposed hypotheses are presented in Figure 1. H_1 posits that Brand Activism (BA) has a positive and significant effect on Green Repurchase Intention (GRI). H_2 posits that Environmental Awareness (EA) has a positive and significant effect on Green Repurchase Intention (GRI). H_3 posits that Circular Economy Behavior (CEB) has a positive and significant effect on Green Repurchase Intention (GRI). H_4 posits that Brand Activism (BA) has a positive and significant effect on Circular Economy Behavior (CEB). H_5 posits that Environmental Awareness (EA) has a positive and significant effect on Circular Economy Behavior (CEB). H_6 posits that Circular Economy Behavior (CEB) mediates the relationship between Brand Activism (BA) and Green Repurchase Intention (GRI). H_7 posits that Circular Economy Behavior (CEB) mediates the relationship between Environmental Awareness (EA) and Green Repurchase Intention (GRI).

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and structural model results, including the path coefficients, means, and standard deviations for the relationships among the variables examined in this study. The results indicate that Brand Activism (BA) has a positive relationship with Circular Economy Behavior (CEB), with a mean value of 0.491 and a standard deviation of 0.088, suggesting a relatively consistent distribution of responses around the mean. Similarly, Environmental Awareness (EA) demonstrates a positive relationship with CEB (mean = 0.491, SD = 0.090), indicating that higher levels of environmental awareness are associated with greater engagement in circular economy practices.

Furthermore, Circular Economy Behavior (CEB) shows a strong positive relationship with Green Repurchase Intention (GRI) (mean = 0.765, SD = 0.045), reflecting a high degree of consistency among respondents in linking sustainable behavior to repurchase intentions. Brand Activism (BA) also exhibits a positive relationship with GRI

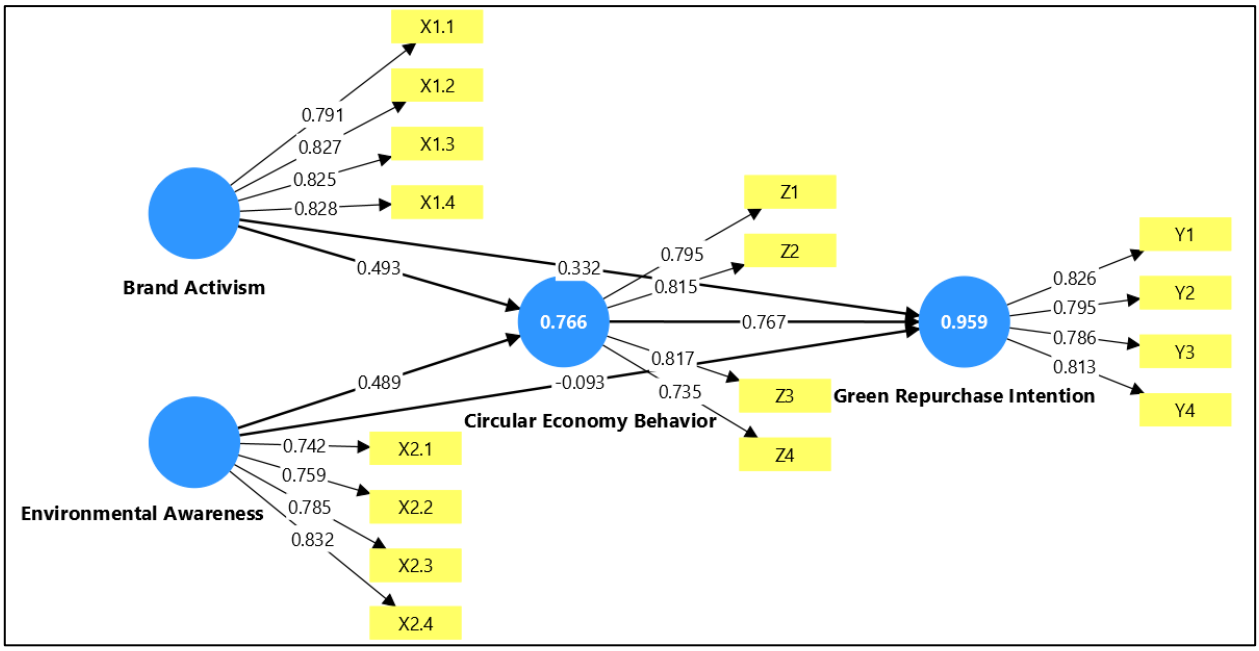

Figure 2. Cross loading.

Table 2. Convergent validity and composite reliability.

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
BA	0.837	0.852	0.669
EA	0.787	0.797	0.609
CEB	0.819	0.821	0.648
GRI	0.801	0.808	0.626

(mean = 0.330, SD = 0.029), with the relatively low standard deviation indicating stable responses across respondents. In contrast, Environmental Awareness (EA) shows a negative relationship with GRI (mean = -0.087, SD = 0.041), although the low standard deviation suggests that respondents' perceptions remain relatively consistent.

3.2. Measurement Model Evaluation

The measurement (outer) model was evaluated to assess the validity and reliability of the constructs. As presented in Table 2, all constructs exhibit Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70, while the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are above 0.50. These results indicate that all constructs satisfy the criteria for internal consistency reliability and convergent validity. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values greater than 0.70 demonstrate satisfactory internal consistency, whereas AVE values above 0.50 confirm adequate convergent validity for all constructs.

Furthermore, the cross-loading results presented in Figure 2 show that each indicator loads more strongly on its corresponding construct than on other constructs, thereby confirming discriminant validity. These findings suggest that the constructs of Brand Activism (BA), Environmental Awareness (EA), Circular Economy Behavior (CEB), and Green Repurchase Intention (GRI) are empirically distinct, with no evidence of indicator redundancy or construct overlap.

3.3. Structural Model Results

Structural model analysis was conducted to examine the causal relationships among the latent constructs specified in the conceptual framework. The results presented in Table 3 were obtained using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach. This analysis estimates the magnitude of both direct and indirect effects among Brand Activism (BA), Environmental Awareness (EA), Circular Economy Behavior (CEB), and Green Repurchase Intention (GRI). The significance of these effects was assessed using a bootstrapping procedure, which generated t-values and p-values to determine whether the proposed hypotheses were supported.

The results indicate that all direct relationships are statistically significant. Brand Activism (BA) has a positive and significant effect on Circular Economy Behavior (CEB) (β=0.493, t=5.576, p=0.000), indicating that stronger brand activism encourages consumers to engage in circular economy practices. Similarly, Environmental Awareness (EA) positively affects CEB (β=0.489, t=5.430,

Table 3. Results of structural equation modeling (SEM) estimation.

Variable Path	Standardized Coef. (O)	t-Stat. (|O/STDEV|)	P-Value
BA → CEB	0.493***	5.576	0.000
EA → CEB	0.489***	5.430	0.000
CEB → GRI	0.767***	16.989	0.000
BA → GRI	0.332***	11.412	0.000
EA → GRI	-0.093**	2.266	0.023
BA → CEB → GRI	0.378***	9.473	0.000
EA → CEB → GRI	0.375**	2.246	0.025

Note: *** and ** indicate significance at the 1% and 5% levels, respectively.

Table 4. Coefficient of determination (R^2).

Model	R^2	R^2 Adj.
CEB	0.959	0.958
GRI	0.766	0.761

p=0.000), suggesting that higher levels of environmental awareness promote sustainable consumption behavior.

Circular Economy Behavior (CEB) exhibits a strong positive effect on Green Repurchase Intention (GRI) (β=0.767, t=16.989, p=0.000), indicating that consumers who adopt circular behaviors are more likely to repurchase environmentally friendly products. Brand Activism (BA) also has a positive and significant direct effect on GRI (β=0.332, t=11.412, p=0.000). In contrast, Environmental Awareness (EA) has a negative but significant effect on GRI (β=-0.093, t=2.266, p=0.023), suggesting a more complex relationship between environmental awareness and repurchase intention.

Among all direct relationships, the effect of CEB on GRI is the strongest, as indicated by the highest standardized path coefficient (β=0.767). This finding suggests that sustainable repurchase intention is influenced more strongly by actual circular consumption practices than by cognitive awareness or brand-related perceptions alone.

The mediation analysis reveals that Circular Economy Behavior (CEB) serves as an important behavioral mechanism. The indirect effect of BA on GRI through CEB is positive and significant (β=0.378, t=9.473, p=0.000), indicating that brand activism enhances repurchase intention by encouraging circular consumption behavior. Similarly, the indirect effect of EA on GRI through CEB is also significant (β=0.375, t=2.246, p=0.025), suggesting that environmental awareness influences repurchase intention through its impact on circular economy behavior. These findings indicate that CEB partially mediates the relationships between BA and GRI and between EA and GRI.

Overall, the mediation results suggest that CEB functions as a behavioral pathway through which environmental values and brand-related stimuli are translated into sustainable repurchasing behavior.

3.4. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) reflects the extent to which the exogenous variables explain the variance of the endogenous variables. As shown in Table 4, the results indicate substantial explanatory power of the structural model.

The Circular Economy Behavior (CEB) construct has an R^2 value of 0.959, indicating that 95.9% of its variance is explained by Brand Activism (BA) and Environmental Awareness (EA). Meanwhile, the Green Repurchase Intention (GRI) construct exhibits an R^2 value of 0.766, suggesting that 76.6% of its variance is explained by the combined effects of BA, EA, and CEB.

R^2 values represent the proportion of variance in the endogenous constructs explained by their respective exogenous constructs. Higher R^2 values indicate greater explanatory power of the structural model. These findings demonstrate that the proposed model possesses strong explanatory power, particularly for Circular Economy Behavior, and provides a robust explanation of the relationships among the constructs within the context of sustainable consumption and circular economy behavior.

3.5. Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that Brand Activism (BA), Environmental Awareness (EA), and Circular Economy Behavior (CEB) play significant roles in shaping Green Repurchase Intention (GRI), both directly and indirectly. The results suggest that sustainable consumption behavior is driven not only by cognitive awareness and brand perceptions but also by active behavioral engagement within the circular economy framework.

Brand Activism was found to have a positive and significant effect on Circular Economy Behavior. This finding indicates that brands demonstrating a strong commitment to environmental and social issues can encourage consumers to adopt more sustainable consumption practices. This result is consistent with Nguyen et al. [12], who found that brand activism

strengthens consumer loyalty through perceived authenticity and alignment with social values. Similarly, Gutiérrez et al. [9] reported that consumers respond positively to brands that consistently engage in social and environmental responsibility, which subsequently becomes part of perceived brand value. In the present study, such engagement is reflected in the adoption of circular economy behaviors, suggesting that brand activism extends beyond attitudinal influence to promote actual behavioral change.

Environmental Awareness was also found to have a positive and significant effect on Circular Economy Behavior. This result suggests that individuals with higher levels of environmental knowledge and concern are more likely to engage in sustainable practices, such as product reuse and the selection of environmentally friendly products. This finding is consistent with Prabowo [10], who demonstrated that environmental awareness significantly influences green purchase intention, particularly when supported by strong brand signals. The present study extends these findings by confirming that environmental awareness translates into behavioral action through the adoption of circular economy practices.

Circular Economy Behavior emerged as the strongest predictor of Green Repurchase Intention, indicating that consumers who consistently engage in sustainable consumption practices are more likely to repurchase environmentally friendly products. This finding reinforces the argument that behavioral engagement represents a critical mechanism through which sustainability-oriented intentions are transformed into repeated purchasing behavior. The result is supported by Prasetya [18], who found that sustainable consumption behavior among Generation Z is strongly influenced by green-oriented practices embedded in daily consumption activities. Furthermore, Minbashrazgah et al. [20] emphasized that behavioral intentions are shaped by actual consumption patterns rather than attitudes alone, highlighting the importance of consistent behavior in driving purchasing decisions. The present study confirms that Circular Economy Behavior facilitates the transformation of sustainability-oriented values into long-term consumption commitment.

The magnitude of the standardized path coefficient further indicates that Circular Economy Behavior exerts the strongest direct influence on Green Repurchase Intention among all predictors included in the model. This finding highlights that actual engagement in circular consumption practices plays a more decisive role in shaping sustainable repurchase intentions than environmental cognition or brand-related perceptions alone.

Brand Activism was also found to have a positive and significant direct effect on Green Repurchase Intention. This finding suggests that consumers are more likely to repeatedly purchase products from brands perceived as socially and environmentally responsible. This result is consistent with Nguyen et al. [12], who reported that brand activism enhances consumer loyalty, which is closely associated with repurchase behavior. Similarly, Gutiérrez et al. [9] concluded that corporate social responsibility contributes significantly to long-term consumer preference and brand attachment. Therefore, brand activism not only influences consumer behavior indirectly through Circular Economy Behavior but also strengthens consumers' direct commitment to repurchasing environmentally friendly products.

However, Environmental Awareness was found to have a negative but significant direct effect on Green Repurchase Intention, indicating a more complex relationship between environmental awareness and sustainable purchasing behavior. This finding suggests the existence of an attitude-behavior gap, whereby high levels of environmental awareness do not necessarily translate into repeated purchasing behavior. Previous studies such as like by Kirchherr et al. [7] and Lim & Lee [31] have similarly reported discrepancies between environmental concern and actual purchasing decisions. Ogiemwonyi [8] further argued that the influence of environmental awareness varies across contexts and is often moderated by economic and situational factors. In the present study, consumers with higher levels of environmental awareness may become more critical regarding product price, quality, or the authenticity of environmental claims, which may ultimately reduce their repurchase intention.

The mediation analysis demonstrates that Circular Economy Behavior serves as an important behavioral mechanism linking Brand Activism and Environmental Awareness to Green Repurchase Intention. This finding indicates that both brand-related and cognitive factors influence repurchase intention primarily through behavioral transformation. The result is consistent with Sari et al. [19], who found that pro-environmental identity and values influence purchase intention through behavioral engagement. Likewise, Joshi & Rahman [32] emphasized that sustainable consumption is a multi-stage process involving cognitive, behavioral, and contextual dimensions. The present study extends this perspective by empirically validating Circular Economy Behavior as a central behavioral pathway within the sustainable consumption process.

The mediation findings further suggest that Circular Economy Behavior enhances the translation of environmental values and brand-related perceptions into sustainable repurchasing intentions. In other words, environmental awareness and brand-related values become more effective in encouraging sustainable repurchasing when they are manifested through consistent circular consumption practices.

Overall, the findings suggest that Green Repurchase Intention is driven not only by environmental awareness and brand perceptions but also by their translation into consistent sustainable behavior. Circular Economy Behavior serves as a key behavioral bridge linking sustainability-related antecedents to long-term repurchasing outcomes.

4. Conclusions, Implications and Limitations

This study examines the influence of Brand Activism (BA) and Environmental Awareness (EA) on Green Repurchase Intention (GRI), with Circular Economy Behavior (CEB) serving as a mediating construct. The findings confirm that both Brand Activism and Environmental Awareness significantly influence Circular Economy Behavior, which, in turn, strongly enhances Green Repurchase Intention. In addition, Brand Activism directly strengthens repurchase intention, whereas Environmental Awareness exhibits a negative but significant direct effect, indicating a more complex relationship between awareness and purchasing behavior.

A key conclusion of this study is that Circular Economy Behavior represents the primary behavioral driver of sustainable consumption practices. Consumers who actively engage in behaviors such as product reuse, preference for durable goods, and avoidance of single-use products are more likely to demonstrate strong green repurchase intentions. This finding suggests that behavioral engagement plays a more decisive role than cognitive awareness alone in fostering long-term sustainable consumption patterns.

Among all predictors, CEB demonstrates the strongest direct effect on GRI, indicating that sustainable repurchase intention is driven primarily by actual circular consumption behavior rather than by environmental awareness alone. Furthermore, the mediation results indicate that CEB facilitates the translation of environmental awareness and brand-related values into consistent sustainable purchasing behavior.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the literature by integrating brand-related factors and cognitive awareness within a circular economy framework. It extends prior research by positioning Circular Economy Behavior not merely as an outcome construct but also as a behavioral transmission mechanism linking antecedent factors to repurchase outcomes. The findings also provide empirical evidence supporting the existence of the attitude-behavior gap, particularly as reflected in the negative direct effect of Environmental Awareness on repurchase intention.

From a practical perspective, the findings offer important implications for businesses and policymakers. Companies should focus not only on increasing environmental awareness but also on encouraging actual behavioral change through circular economy initiatives, such as promoting product durability, recycling programs, and sustainable packaging. Authentic and consistent brand activism is also essential for building consumer trust and fostering long-term commitment. For policymakers, the findings suggest that educational campaigns should be complemented by programs that facilitate sustainable behavior, thereby ensuring that environmental awareness is effectively translated into action.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the research is limited to respondents from Banda Aceh City and Aceh Besar Regency, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other regions with different socioeconomic and cultural characteristics. Second, the quantitative research design limits the ability to capture deeper insights into consumer motivations and behavioral dynamics. Future studies are therefore encouraged to adopt mixed-method approaches, expand the geographical scope of the investigation, and incorporate additional variables, such as price sensitivity, green trust, social influence, and perceived value. These factors may provide a more comprehensive understanding of sustainable consumer behavior within the circular economy context.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, M.M.; methodology, M.M.; software, M.M.; validation, S.H.H. and A.S.; formal analysis, S.H.H.; investigation, A.S.; resources, M.M.; data curation, M.M.; writing—original draft preparation, S.H.H. and A.S.; writing—review and editing, M.M. and A.S.; visualization, S.H.H.; supervision M.M.; project administration, M.M. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This study does not receive external funding.

Data Availability Statement: Data supporting this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Due to confidentiality agreements, raw data are not publicly available but may be shared in anonymized form for academic purposes.

Acknowledgments: The authors would like to express their gratitude to their respective institutions.

Conflicts of Interest: All the authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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