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Exploring Psychological and Policy Drivers of EV Conversion on Urbanites Professionals

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Abstract: The paper examines the direct influence of attitude on purchase intention toward EV adoption in Indonesia. This article also attempts to analyze the impact of social influence and government incentives on attitude and self-efficacy on perceived behavioral control. For research purposes, quantitative research was applied by conducting an empirical survey with the active participation of 191 urbanite car owners who live in metropolitan Jakarta in Indonesia. We use model principal component analysis (PCA) with partial least squares–structural equation modelling (PLS–SEM) (SmartPLS) for measurement and structural model analysis. This study explains how psychological considerations influence EV consumers' buying behavior and attitude more than policy drivers. The result shows how metropolitan consumers consider the interactions between attitude and purchase intention towards adopting electric vehicles in Indonesia. The practical implications of the research findings could provide managerial insight targeting consumers with the same characteristics, considering the size of this consumer in Southeast Asia, South Asia, and developing countries in Africa and South America (at least 10-15 metropolitan cities).

Keywords: Electric Vehicle, Social Influence, Government Incentives, EV Attitude, EV Purchase Intention, Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

The Fourth Industrial Revolution, called Industry 4.0 or the Digital Revolution, has initiated a period of significant technological advancements that profoundly impacted the global economy. Industry 4.0 signifies merging digital technologies with physical systems, integrating cyber-physical systems, the Internet of Things (IoT), big data analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), and robotics. Transformative technologies are revolutionizing industries globally, redefining production processes, workforce dynamics, and business models. Industry 4.0 builds on the preceding three industrial revolutions, which were marked by dramatic shifts in production processes and social structures. The first industrial revolution automated

production using water and steam power, while the second industrial revolution brought mass production and assembly lines with electricity. The third industrial revolution introduced automation and computerization to the manufacturing industry, combining electronics and information technology (Fawna, 2023).

Many implementations aim to reduce CO2 emissions, necessitating renewable energy, GDP considerations, and fossil fuel consumption metrics. Various approaches encompass wind and solar technology, the development of energy-efficient residences, and reduced taxes for acquiring electric vehicles and low-energy appliances (Ponce & Khan, 2021). Combining renewables usage and energy efficiency can reduce emissions by 94%, meeting the Paris Climate Agreement targets. Recent scenario assessments agree that renewable energy and energy efficiency are the most practical ways to achieve climate goals, despite differences in the absolute numbers (Gielen et al., 2019).

Electric vehicles are one of the transitions to renewable energy, and they can be one of the leading solutions to reduce CO2 emissions in large urban areas. Lower taxes can be applied on electric vehicles and energy-efficient appliances (Ponce & Khan, 2021). Local government regulations also play a significant role in the imposition of taxes. Another study revealed that social media, friendships, and eWOM readership serve as tools to cultivate the social influence of a brand; this also applies to electric vehicles (Liang et al., 2024b). In other words, lower taxes, government incentives, and social influence can influence an attitude. However, according to data on electric car sales in Indonesia in 2024 released by the Association of Indonesian Automotive Industries (GAIKINDO), one of Indonesia's most significant automotive associations, the opposite finding is shown. Despite official support from the government, the sales figures remain low, indicating obstacles to the widespread adoption of this technology. According to Gaikindo data, electric vehicle (BEV) sales in Indonesia only reached 42,889 units in 2024. However, this sales figure is still lower than the Indonesian government's target of 50,000 units for the same year (GAIKINDO, 2024).

Literature Review

1. Social Influence

   SI stands for social influence. SI refers to how an individual with attitudes, beliefs, and subsequent behaviors is shaped by referent others (Bartal et al., 2019). This theory encompasses three processes: compliance, identification, and internalization. Burger et al. (2001) indicated that compliance arises in response to requests from individuals one likes or approves of, influenced by reciprocity. Furthermore, a more remarkable perceived similarity between two individuals enhances compliance, even when the similarities are superficial (Burger et al., 2001; Kim & Kim, 2020). This indicates that a person's behavior and decisions are strongly influenced by their environment and the people around them who exert influence.

2. Government Incentive

   GI stands for government incentive. GI is defined as any government measure intended to influence an investment decision or enhance profit, regardless of whether these measures exert direct influence (Ginevičius & Šimelytė, 2011). Recently, many governments have implemented measures to promote interest in electric vehicles, as noted by (Higueras-Castillo et al., 2020). Numerous developing nations have established governmental incentives to promote electric vehicle adoption, with Brazil as one example. In 2024, the Brazilian government implemented incentives through tax exemptions, including IPI, and discounts or exemptions on IPVA (motor vehicle tax in Brazil). The incentive policy aligns with environmental objectives aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, advancing sector decarbonization, and enhancing vehicle

affordability in Brazil. This policy has effectively stimulated the national industry in electric vehicle production and accelerated the transition to sustainable transportation (Soares et al., 2024).

3. EV Attitude

ATT stands for attitude towards EV adoption. ATT refers to the degree to which people have a positive or negative opinion of a behavior, which is their attitude toward it (Bennett & Vijaygopal, 2018). This involves an individual's self-assessment regarding the morality of specific behaviors and the desire to engage in those behaviors (Wang, Zhang, Ding, et al., 2022b). A positive attitude towards a product is intuitively linked to a higher likelihood of purchasing that product (Bennett & Vijaygopal, 2018). An attitude is an enduring organization of motivational, emotional, perceptual, and cognitive processes concerning some aspects of our environment. An attitude is how a person thinks, feels, and acts toward some aspects of their environment, such as a retail store, television program, or product. There are four components in an attitude, namely the cognitive component, the affective component, the behavioral component, and component consistency (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010).

4. EV Purchase Intention

Purchase intention defines the likelihood of consumers buying a brand or engaging in purchasing activities, assessed by the probability of consumers making purchases (Belch & Belch, 2009). Purchase intention remains a significant concept in marketing. A previous study from Axelrod (1968) examined purchase intentions and various attitude measures to forecast purchasing behavior. Previous research from Soares et al. (2024) conducted in developing countries, including Brazil, indicates that reduced negative environmental impact, lower maintenance costs, advanced technology, and government incentives significantly influence the decision to purchase an electric vehicle (EV). According to the data, when the respondents were asked about vehicle technology preferences for a potential purchase, 37.9% expressed interest in HEVs, followed by PHEVs at 26.4%, BEVs at 20.0%, and FCEVs at 15.7%.

Hypotheses

This study's hypotheses about variables are explained in detail below:

1. Social influences and EV attitude

In the context of intentions to purchase electric vehicles, the attitudes of specific social groups can significantly impact individual decision-making. Consumers who experience strong social influence are likely to develop a positive attitude towards electric vehicles (Jayasingh et al., 2021). Some consumers consistently pursue social validation when purchasing and utilizing an electric vehicle. Individuals will avoid buying products perceived as lacking social approval (Lee et al., 2021). The findings from previous studies indicated that social influence significantly impacts consumers' intention to purchase electric vehicles. Previous research carried out in Thailand, a developing country within the ASEAN region, identified that attitudes toward using electric vehicles (EVs) are regarded as the most significant factor influencing the acceptance of EV technology. Therefore, it is essential to prioritize ustomer attitudes regarding the use of EVs to improve public acceptance of EV technology within the domestic context (Phuthong, T. et al., 2024). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Social influence has a positive effect on attitudes towards EVs.

2. Government incentives and EV attitude

Governments currently promote the use of electric vehicles in their countries through different approaches. Subsidies for electric vehicle acquisitions are crucial in raising demand (Hao et al., 2014). Prior research from Xue et al. (2021) identified three categories of incentives the government can offer: fiscal, non-financial, and socio-economic factors. Another study from Ali & Naushad (2022) stated that financial and non-financial incentives provided by the government are the most successful method of promoting electric vehicles for transportation. Financial policies concerning governmental monetary incentives, including preferential taxation, an exemption from tolls and parking fees, a reduction of acquisition and value-added taxes, electricity subsidies, road tax exemptions, and fossil fuel taxes, are aimed at promoting the use of electric vehicles. Non-financial policies include driver privileges, tax exemptions, charging infrastructure incentives, bus lane driving privileges, EV license plates, and electric vehicle priority during heavy traffic (Van Tuan et al., 2022). Financial incentives play a significant role in establishing attitudes toward adopting electric vehicles. It suggests that individuals are more inclined to adopt electric automobiles if they see the product as more affordable (Khurana et al., 2019).

Research findings indicate that government incentives can encourage consumer attitudes about electric vehicles (EVs). Previous studies indicate that financial incentives significantly affect attitude (Egnér & Trosvik, 2018b), while non-financial incentives have minimal influence (Huang & Ge, 2019). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Government incentives have a positive effect on attitudes towards EVs.

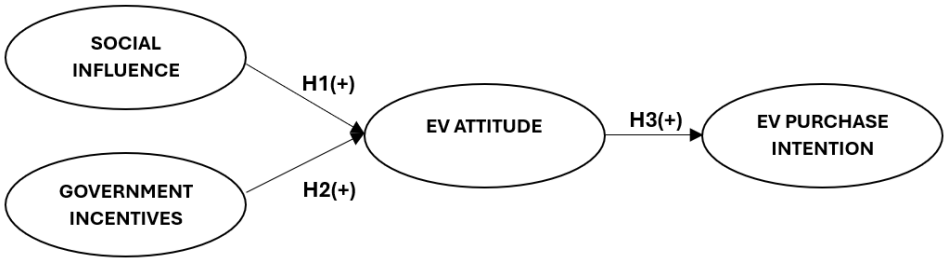
3. EV attitude and EV purchase intention

Previous studies have demonstrated the influence of attitude on intention within marketing contexts, including green marketing. For instance, Wang et al. (2022) identified attitude as the primary predictor of consumers' intention to adopt electric vehicles (EVs), while Ong et al. (2023) established the impact of attitude on the intention to purchase hybrid cars. An illustrative example of this phenomenon is evident in the Indian consumer market, where the environmentally conscious attitudes of individuals significantly affect their intentions to purchase electric vehicles. The increasing prevalence of environmental awareness in India is consistent with the findings of the existing literature. This confirms that the attitude toward the target (ATT) significantly impacts consumer preferences, particularly in areas concerning sustainability. Extensive research consistently demonstrates a positive association between attitude toward the target (ATT) and behavioral intention, particularly regarding eco-friendly products (Aitken, R et al., 2020; Bharti, K et al., 2022).

Other prior research has explored the distinctions between individuals with positive and negative attitudes towards electric vehicles (EVs), indicating that those with favorable attitudes are more likely to intend to purchase EVs (Jayasingh et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2024; Yeğin & Ikram, 2022). Based on the studies, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Attitude has a positive effect on purchase intention towards EVs.

Figure 1. Illustrates the primary relationships connecting the variables.



Source: Developed by the authors

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODS

Population and Sampling

The research design for this study was a quantitative research design that was applied by conducting an empirical survey. A comprehensive questionnaire was developed based on the literature regarding electric vehicle purchase intentions using Google Forms, which was distributed randomly. Four items were adopted from previous research to measure social influences (Vahdat et al., 2020b). Furthermore, four items were applied from several studies to measure government incentives (Van Tuan et al., 2022). Then, in measuring EV attitude, five items were adopted from previous studies (Li et al., 2021). Last, in measuring EV purchase intention, five items were taken from several scholars (Z. Wang et al., 2024; Dutta & Hwang, 2021). The questionnaire was divided into two parts: part one contained demographic variables such as gender, age, and job, and part two consisted of data to measure the variables identified in this study, which were social influence, government incentives, EV attitude, and EV purchase intention. The participants responded to the item using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The population of this study was car owners in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi. These cities are major cities in Indonesia in terms of development levels, where the adoption of electric vehicles was earlier compared to smaller towns that did not yet have adequate infrastructure for electric cars. The sample size in the study pertained to an unknown population. This study employed the 10X rule method to ascertain the minimum number of respondents required. The minimum sample size for this study was 40, given the presence of 4 variables. However, 200 respondents were utilized to enhance the accuracy of the results.

Limitations

As is typical in any study, the scope of our research was constrained by time and space. The primary research activities, including the survey, were conducted from September 2024 to November 2024. The location was confined to the Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi regions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study analyzed the results derived from the data collection. To confirm the reliability and validity of the scales, we tested the fit of the measurement model by conducting a principal component analysis (PCA) using partial least squares–structural equation modeling (PLS–SEM) (SmartPLS). Specifically, PCA was accomplished in Smart-PLS 4.0.9.9 by testing four constructs: social influence, government incentives, attitude, and electric vehicle purchase intention. Subsequently, the SmartPLS 4.0.9.9 bootstrapping technique was used to measure the corresponding relationships for the hypotheses. Table 1 summarizes the primary demographics.

Profile of the Respondents

The questionnaire was distributed to 200 respondents, with 191 owning gasoline-powered cars and the remaining nine stating that they do not own a car. The data from the respondents indicates that the percentage of men is 62.3%, and the percentage of women is 37.7%. According to the data, most car users are men who drive to work. Some live in Jakarta's surrounding cities, including Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi, which are more than ten kilometers away, reflecting the majority of GDP contribution to the country and high consumer technological adoption per capita.

Table 1: Summary of Demographic Information

Demographics	Group	Total	%ss
Gender	Men	119	62.30
	Women	72	37.70
Age	25 - 30 years	22	11.52
	31 - 35 years	61	31.94
	36 - 40 years	60	31.41
	> 41 years	48	25.13
Job	Housewife	16	8.38
	Private Employee	131	68.59
	Student	2	1.05
	Civil Servant	2	1.05
	Unemployed	1	0.52
	Army	1	0.52
	Entrepreneur	38	19.90

Evaluation of Reliability and Validity

To determine the scale's reliability and validity, we measured the factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) values for all the constructs in this study. We started by using the data gathered from the respondents to test the validity and reliability. This study's questionnaire was checked for reliability using Cronbach's α to determine the scale's reliability. Cronbach's alpha is extensively utilized to assess internal consistency in SmartPLS and evaluate the dependability of the results. The dependability of the indicator spans from 0 to 1, and the obtained constructs should exceed the threshold of 0.70 (Sarstedt et al., 2017; Cronbach, 1951b). The Cronbach's alphas for all constructs, as shown in Table 2, ranged from 0.839 to 0.924. The factor loadings for the variables ranged from 0.539 to 0.945, while the composite reliability (CR) tests varied between 0.887 and 0.947.

The convergent validity was assessed using composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE). The CR coefficient must exceed 0.7, considering the variability of factor loadings among the items (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). The CR tests in this study exhibited values between 0.887 and 0.947. A variance of 0.5 or higher is considered acceptable for AVE (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988) - the result of the validity analysis. The monotrait ratio results for the EV attitude construct are 0.784. Other results indicate a correlation of 0.766 between EV purchase intention and EV attitude. The monotrait ratio results for the EV purchase intention construct are 0.885. The relationship between government incentives and EV attitude yields a value of 0.624, while the correlation with EV purchase intention is 0.715. The monotrait ratio results for the government incentives construct are 0.855. Social influence yields a value of 0.689 for EV attitude, 0.815 for EV purchase intention, and 0.868 for government incentives.

The monotrait ratio results for the social influence construct are 0.913. The AVE tests satisfied the criteria, ranging from 0.615 to 0.834. The discriminant validity test is based on the heterotrait–monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT).

Table 2: Construct Reliability and Validity

Constructs	Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's α	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
EV Attitude	$EVATT_1$	0.650	0.839	0.887	0.615
	$EVATT_2$	0.697			
	$EVATT_3$	0.924			
	$EVATT_4$	0.815			
	$EVATT_5$	0.804			
EV Purchase Intention	$EVPI_1$	0.898	0.93	0.947	0.782
	$EVPI_2$	0.843			
	$EVPI_3$	0.871			
	$EVPI_4$	0.894			
	$EVPI_5$	0.915			
Government Incentives	GI_1	0.539	0.863	0.912	0.73
	GI_2	0.928			
	GI_3	0.942			
	GI_4	0.939			
Social Influence	SI_1	0.932	0.899	0.938	0.834
	SI_2	0.945			
	SI_4	0.859			

Structural Model Evaluation

The coefficient of determination (R^2) can evaluate the model's predictive accuracy. Figure 2 illustrates that the R2 value of 0.587 exceeds 0.26, indicating a substantial model (Cohen, 2013). The exogenous variables (social influence, government incentives, and EV attitude) account for 58.7% of the variance in purchase intention towards an electric vehicle.

This study employed quantitative data, utilizing the bootstrapping method as a nonparametric procedure to evaluate the statistical significance of the PLS-SEM results. Fig. 3 presents the testing outcomes conducted via the bootstrapping method, utilizing a subsample of 1000 at a significant level of 0.05.

R-squared and F-squared

Table 3: R-squared Summary

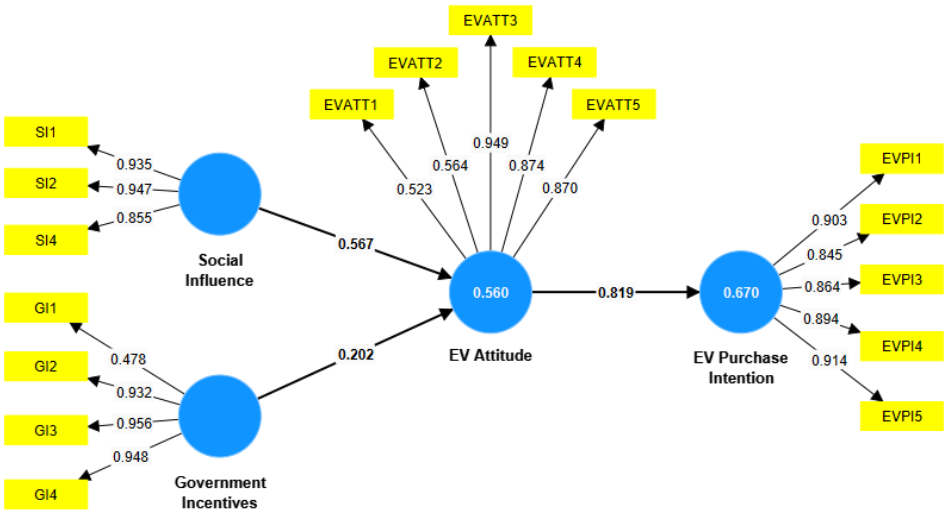
	R-square	R-square adjusted
EV Attitude	0.556	0.552
EV Purchase Intention	0.67	0.669

The R-square value for EV Purchase Intention, presented in Table 3, is 0.67. The guidelines provided indicate that this value is substantial (Cohen, 2013). The EV Attitude exhibits a value of 0.556, which is substantial. This suggests that the model demonstrates a significant predictive ability for the EV purchase intention and EV attitude construct. Table 4 presents the Effect Size f-square. Table 4 shows that Government Incentives have a value of

0.028, indicating minor effects on EV Attitude (Cohen, 2013). On the other hand, Social Influences have a value of 0.173, indicating medium effects (Cohen, 2013) on EV Attitude.

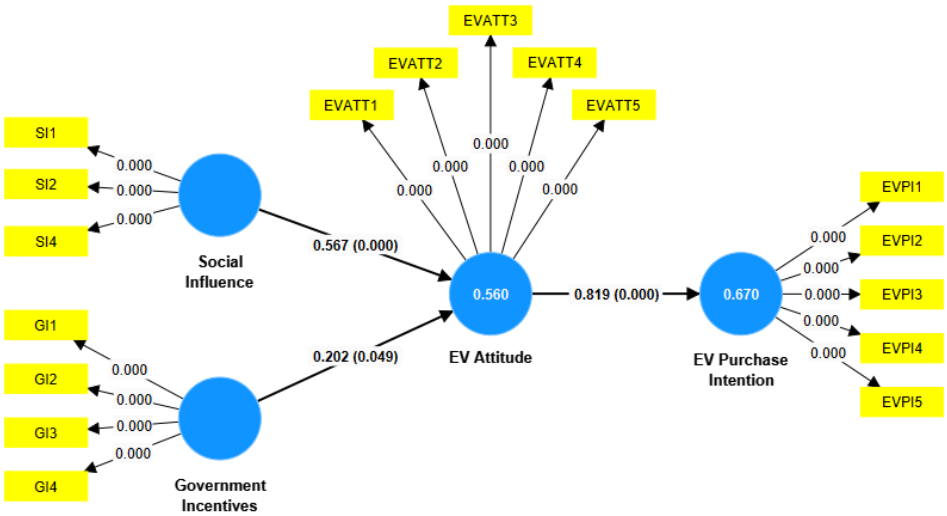
Table 4: F-Square Summary

	EV Attitude	EV Purchase Intention	Government Incentives	Social Influence
EV Attitude		2.034		
EV Purchase Intention				
Government Incentives	0.028			
Social Influence	0.173			



Source: Developed by the authors

Figure 2. Path Model: Item Loading, Path Coefficient, Level of R2



Source: Developed by the authors

Figure 3. Sample testing using the bootstrapping method

Finally, EV Attitude produces a value of 2.034, indicating significant effects on EV Purchase Intention (Cohen, 2013).

Hypothesis Testing

Three direct hypotheses were developed between the constructs in this study. To determine the degree of significance of these hypotheses, t-statistics were produced using the bootstrapping technique. Table 5 provides a summary of the direct hypothesis testing results.

Table 6 shows the results of measuring the direction and strength of influence between variables in the path model.

Table 5: Direct Effect Testing

Hyphotesis	Relationship	Path coefficients (β)	T Values	P values	Result
H_1	Social Influence -> EV Attitude	0.599**	5.535	0.000	**Supported****
H_2	Government Incentives -> EV Attitude	0.105	0.832	0.406	Not Supported
H_3	EV Attitude -> EV Purchase Intention	0.766**	25.342	0.000	**Supported****

Noted: * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01.

Table 6: Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	STDEV	T - values	P-values	Result
H_1	Social Influence -> EV Attitude	0.599	0.603	0.105	5.72	0.000	Accepted
H_2	Government Incentives -> EV Attitude	0.105	0.101	0.124	0.845	0.398	Rejected
H_3	EV Attitude -> EV Purchase Intention	0.766	0.766	0.031	25.002	0.000	Accepted

Discussion

The researchers can summarize the research findings as follows, based on the data analysis: How Social Influence Significantly Affects Urban Consumers' EV Attitude, the choice of government incentive size used in the study influences or causes whether or not there is an impact on EV attitudes, and how does EV attitude significantly affect urban consumers' EV purchase intention?

The researchers found that the social environment in Indonesia can influence a person's decision to adopt an EV. If someone has a neighbor who has an EV, it can spur the person's desire to have an EV. However, some people continue to use gasoline-powered cars for economic reasons. They argue that gasoline-powered cars are more profitable than using an EV. Especially for Indonesians, the traffic jams in the Jakarta area and its surroundings also influence someone to adopt an EV. In addition, in Indonesian society, there is a phenomenon that electric cars are vehicles that can only be owned by people with high incomes.

The Indonesian government implements various policies to support the industrialization of battery electric vehicles (BEVs). These include the luxury goods value added tax (PPnBM) set to 0% (PP No. 74/2021), a 0% tax on the transfer of motor vehicle ownership rights (BBN-KB) for KBLBB in DKI Jakarta (Pergub No. 3/2020), and a 10% BBN-KB for electric cars and 2.5% for electric motorcycles in West Java (Regulation No. 9/2019) (Ardiyanti et al., 2023). Data from IESR shows that government incentives strongly influence Indonesian society's attitude toward adopting EVs. This is evident from the data on the increase in EV use, which continues to rise from 107,431 units in 2023 to 178,665 units in September 2024 (Halim, 2024). Due to a lack of convenient charging stations and monetary incentives, fewer people in Indonesia are opting to buy electric automobiles. There isn't much of a rush to transition away from fossil fuel vehicles because there aren't any strong incentives. Public information gaps, uneven long-term policy, and sluggish local EV production have also impeded the country's shift towards sustainable transportation. In this study, we only measure government incentives

that EV users can enjoy once: financial benefits. Still, many non-financial benefits can be enjoyed continuously by EV users every day, such as freedom from odd-even license plate rules, special parking for EVs, electricity price subsidies for charging, and others (Xue et al., 2021). Business actors and stakeholders can utilise this to increase EV adoption. According to the reasoning, an individual with heightened awareness of electric vehicle adoption among their peers can enhance their attitude. This substantially influences the intention to purchase electric vehicles. In Indonesia, word of mouth is a fast and effective communication tool. People who have EVs can recommend them to others around them. This encourages the attitude of these people to have a high intention to adopt EVs.

CONCLUSION

This research investigated the two factors influencing electric vehicle purchase intention mediated by EV attitude. Based on the literature review, we conducted the study using the following criteria: social influence, government incentives, and EV attitude.

This study revealed that social influence will increase consumers' intentions to purchase, as consumers will buy the products recommended by their friends, colleagues, or family members. This study also indicated that people will buy products that can make them gain social attention and approval. However, government incentives do not significantly affect the intention to purchase an EV. This implies that government incentives do not increase individuals' purchase intentions because they do not consider electric vehicles more affordable than traditional ones.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

It is important to note that this study has several limitations that must be discussed. First, this study focused on purchase intention rather than actual purchase. On the other hand, purchase intention can be considered an immediate determinant of actual action, further validating this study's findings. However, the empirical evidence might be enhanced by concentrating on the actual purchase of electric vehicles, which will become more feasible in the future as customers increasingly embrace EVs on a larger scale. Secondly, the data for this study were sourced from Indonesia, a developing nation where the infrastructure and readiness for electric vehicle adoption are less advanced than in developed countries. Future research may consider samples from cities with somewhat advanced EV infrastructure. Thirdly, researchers can add more factors that may increase the purchase intention in the future, such as antecedents, mediators, and moderators. Lastly, in this study, an anomaly occurred.

The anomaly was that the measurement results were only in the form of government incentives, which were only enjoyed once by EV users. Still, many non-financial benefits can be enjoyed continuously by EV users every day, such as freedom from odd-even licence plate rules, special parking for EVs, electricity price subsidies for charging, and others that are thought to increase EV adoption. Indonesia is one of the countries with the largest social media users in the world, with 143 million active users who have different characters and can push something to go viral, making EV owners memorable. This number is much larger than that of its neighbouring country, Thailand, which only has 51 million active social media users. Business actors and stakeholders can use this to increase EV adoption (Statista, 2025).

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