

## GREEN CONSUMERISM FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR

**Dr.P.Praba Devi<sup>1\*</sup>,Chinna Vakili Sabiya<sup>2</sup>,Nitish M,Rouban A S<sup>3</sup>,Sanjay S<sup>4</sup>**

**<sup>1\*</sup>Professor, Department of Management Studies, Sona College of Technology, Salem.**

**[prabadevi@sonabusinessschool.com](mailto:prabadevi@sonabusinessschool.com)**

**<sup>2</sup>Student, Department of Management Studies, Sona College of Technology,**

**[Salemcvssabiya@gmail.com](mailto:Salemcvssabiya@gmail.com)**

**<sup>3</sup>Student, Department of Management Studies, Sona College of Technology, Salem**

**[nitishmuthukumar.fl@gmail.com](mailto:nitishmuthukumar.fl@gmail.com)**

**<sup>4</sup>Student, Department of Management Studies, Sona College of Technology, Salem**

**[roubanlaw5@gmail.com](mailto:roubanlaw5@gmail.com)**

**<sup>5</sup>Student, Department of Management Studies, Sona College of Technology, Salem**

**[sanjaysuresh2102001@gmail.com](mailto:sanjaysuresh2102001@gmail.com)**

### Abstract

Sustainability evolves from a simple concept into a critical global issue, the availability of environmental data underscores the need for collective action to mitigate the damage already done to the planet. In response, green consumers are increasingly making consumption choices from a wide range of sustainable products. Green consumerism is not only about purchasing eco-friendly products but also about adopting lifestyles that promote sustainability. This literature review aims to explore key aspects of green consumerism, including its theoretical foundations, drivers, challenges, and the role of digital platforms in shaping consumer behavior. y reviewing past studies, this paper summarizes key findings that contribute to a better understanding of green consumerism, particularly from the perspective of the theory of planned behavior, providing insights into how consumers' intentions and behaviors are influenced by environmental, social, and psychological factors.

**Key words:**Green consumerism, Sustainability, Theory of planned behaviour.

### Introduction

In this incredible environment challenges that are faced like increase in sea levels, global warming, deforestation, and landslides are the factors that are raining awareness among consumers to reiterate the importance of making a wise choice in choosing sustainable products that benefits the environment and consumers at the same time. Goods and services that benefit the environment and increase demand for goods are called green consumerism.

Sustainability has progressed from a simple team to a concept that has influenced the consuming landscape. The breath of accessible environmental data indicates a compelling need for collaborative action to minimize and lessen the damage we have already caused to one environment. Hence,green consumers are making consumption choices between an ever-growing assortment of green products.

Different countries took a strategic effort to make the environment even more green in the U.S adults now recycle their soda bottles and newspapers, and Germans are required law to recycle bottles whereas the European Union doesn't allow the artificial growth hormone of beef to be imported and there is an increase in demand for the green-oriented products to the firms that supply them.

Green consumerism refers to purchasing products and services that are supposed to be environmentally friendly or sustainable. Concerns on climate change, resource depletion, and environmental degradation have increased, so too has hence the attention to green consumerism, is not only the choice of eco-friendly products but also lifestyle changes that support sustainability. Green consumerism is multifaceted, including environmental approaches, ethical consumer behavior, and corporate responsibility. This literature review aims to examine key aspects of green consumerism, including its theoretical foundations, drivers, challenges, and the role of digital platforms and consumer behavior.

The objectives of the study are:

- To understand the Psychological Drivers of Green Consumerism
- To explore the Future of Green Consumerism in the Context of Sustainability Trends
- **To identify how Green Consumerism is formed by Theory of Planned Behavior**

The literature of the previous studies is examined and the findings of the studies are summarized to facilitate the understanding of green consumerism in the perspective of Theory of planned behavior.

Review of Literature:

Several factors drive green consumerism, including environmental awareness, social influence, and corporate responsibility. Research suggests that increased awareness of environmental issues is a key driver of green consumption. Consumers with awareness about the environmental impact of their purchases like carbon footprints, waste, and resource consumption are more likely to adopt for sustainable alternatives (Chan, 2001). Educational campaigns, documentaries, and news coverage of climate change have also played a significant role in raising awareness (Luchs et al., 2010). Studies have shown that individuals are often motivated to engage in environmentally friendly behavior due to social pressures or the desire to conform to societal expectations (Cialdini et al., 1990). Social media and online communities, in particular, have become significant platforms for promoting green consumerism by promoting a sense of collective action and identity among environmentally conscious consumers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The role of businesses in promoting green consumerism cannot be understated. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices, including sustainability initiatives, eco-labelling, and transparency about environmental impacts, influence consumer decisions (Kolk, 2003). Consumers are increasingly holding companies accountable for their environmental impact and demanding that brands demonstrate genuine commitment to sustainability. Eco-labels and certifications, such as Fair Trade, Energy Star, and organic labels, are used to signal a product's environmental credentials and help consumers make informed choices (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). Policies that encourage sustainable consumption, such as subsidies for electric vehicles or tax breaks for energy-efficient home improvements, can incentivize environmentally conscious purchasing behavior (Thøgersen, 2014). Government regulations and incentives play a significant role in promoting green consumerism through environmental reporting and corporate transparency.

Despite its growth, green consumerism faces several challenges in driving sustainable consumption. One of the major barriers to green consumerism is the phenomenon of "greenwashing," where companies falsely claim to be environmentally friendly without implementing substantive sustainable practices. This undermines consumer trust and makes it difficult for individuals to identify truly sustainable brands and products (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). Green products are often perceived as more expensive which may refrain the price-sensitive consumers from adopting sustainable consumption practices. The higher cost of eco-friendly products is often attributed to more expensive raw materials, ethical production processes, and smaller economies of scale. Convenience is another significant barrier to green consumerism. The ease and convenience of mass-market consumption often outweigh the perceived benefits of green alternatives for many consumers (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006).

With increased awareness and availability of green products, many consumers exhibit behavioural inertia, meaning they continue purchasing habits based on convenience, familiarity, and tradition rather than adopting more sustainable behaviours. This resistance to change is a key challenge for promoting green consumerism on a larger scale (Bamberg et al., 2015).

The rise of online consumer reviews, eco-friendly blogs, and sustainability-focused e-commerce platforms has helped to gain access to information, allowing consumers to make more informed choices. Green influencers and digital campaigns have significantly expanded the reach of green consumerism, particularly among younger consumers who are more likely to engage with sustainability content on social media. Researchers have found a significant impact of social media in developing consumer awareness of environmental issues, highlighting the social and environmental costs. The rise of green blogging, particularly on platforms like YouTube and personal blogs, has provided consumers with in-depth information about sustainable fashion, eco-labels, and responsible consumer practices. These blogs often offer practical advice on how to reduce one's carbon footprint and support ethical brands, contributing to the growing popularity of green consumerism (Jørgensen, 2021). Through social media activism, the organization has highlighted the unethical behaviors and inhumane working conditions.

AI promotes green consumerism by optimizing inventory management and reducing waste in the supply chain. By providing more accurate demand forecasting and improving the efficiency of production processes, AI can help fashion brands minimize overproduction, one of the major contributors to environmental harm in the industry. AI and machine learning technologies also help brands better understand consumer preferences for sustainable products, thereby facilitating the growth of eco-friendly offerings on e-commerce platforms.

Herman Fassou Haba et.al (2023) This study offers a thorough overview of research conducted over the past three decades on the topic of 'green consumers' within the marketing management field, revealing the intellectual structure of the area and identifying key research gaps. A bibliometric analysis of 493 Scopus-indexed documents was performed, incorporating keyword network analysis, co-authorship analysis, and reference co-citation analysis using VOS viewer. Additionally, SciMAT analysis was employed to track the evolution of themes and create a strategic map. The study also identified five central themes in green consumer research: consumer buying behavior, sustainable development, green products, human behavioral aspects, and green marketing, with emerging themes of renewable energy and environmental policy.

[Naini, S.R.](#) and [Reddy, M.R.](#) (2024) examines solutions to address the inconsistency between attitudes and behavior in green purchasing among Indian consumers, and identifies factors that can guide Indian marketers in developing effective promotional strategies. The study used a non-probability, criterion-based sampling technique to collect data from 129 respondents in Hyderabad, Telangana, through an online survey. Descriptive analysis was conducted using SPSS v26, while SmartPLS was used for structural modeling. The findings of the study showed that the interpersonal influence has a strong direct effect on green purchase behavior (GPB). Altruism affects green purchase intention (GPI) and GPB indirectly via environmental attitude (EA) and green awareness (GA). EA significantly influences GA and green behavior (GB), with GA and GB acting as mediators between EA and green consumption behavior (GCB). Perceived environmental knowledge (PEK) does not have a direct or indirect effect on GPB.

### **Theoretical Foundations of Green Consumerism**

Green consumerism is supported by several psychological and sociological theories, including the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Value-Belief-Norm Theory. According to Theory of Planned

Behavior, consumer behavior is influenced by three primary factors namely attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). These factors influence a consumer to purchase sustainable products based on their attitudes toward environmental protection, and their perceived ability to engage in sustainable practices.

The Value-Belief-Norm Theory, developed by Stern et al. (1999), highlights the role of personal values and beliefs in driving environmentally conscious behavior. According to this theory, individuals who are more concerned about environmental issues are more likely to engage in green consumerism. Theories suggest that green consumerism is a reflection of deeper values and social influences that guide consumer decisions.

### **A Model of Green Consumerism Using the Theory of Planned Behavior**

The **Theory of Planned Behavior** developed by Icek Ajzen, is a widely used psychological model for understanding human decision-making and predicting behavior in various domains. **Theory of Planned Behavior** states that three key components namely **attitudes**, **subjective norms**, and **perceived behavioural control**—influence individuals' **behavioral intentions**, which in turn lead to actual behavior. When applied to **green consumerism**, this model provides a framework for understanding the factors that influence consumers to make environmentally conscious purchasing decisions. This model aims to explain the determinants **of green consumer behaviours** such as purchasing eco-friendly products, supporting sustainable brands, or reducing environmental footprints, focusing on how consumers' attitudes, social pressures, and perceived control affect their decisions to engage in green consumption.

### **Key Constructs of the Theory of Planned Behavior Model for Green Consumerism**

#### **1. Attitudes Toward Green Consumerism**

Attitudes refer to the consumer's favorable or unfavorable evaluation of engaging in environmentally friendly behaviors, such as purchasing green products or adopting a sustainable lifestyle. These attitudes are influenced by environmental beliefs, perceived benefits and personal values.

**Environmental beliefs:** Consumers who are concerned about environmental degradation, climate change, or resource depletion are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward green consumption (Tanner & Wölfiging Kast, 2003).

**Perceived benefits:** Consumers' trust that eco-friendly products or behaviors benefit the environment and strengthen positive attitudes. For example, those who perceive organic foods as healthier or biodegradable products as reducing pollution may be more inclined to make green choices (Joshi & Rahman, 2015).

**Personal values:** Biospheric values, altruism, or a sense of environmental responsibility play a crucial role in shaping attitudes towards green consumerism. Consumers with strong pro-environmental values are more likely to view sustainable consumption positively (Stern et al., 1999).

**Hypothesis 1:** Consumers with positive attitudes towards the environmental impact of their consumption choices are more likely to engage in green consumerism.

## 2. Subjective Norms

Subjective norms reflect the perceived social pressures from others, such as family, friends, peers, or societal expectations, to perform a behavior.

**Social influence:** individuals believe that people around them, including family, friends, or influential social networks, expect them to buy green products or adopt sustainable practices, they are more likely to do so themselves (Bamberg & Möser, 2007).

**Cultural and societal values:** Environmental sustainability is a key social value, consumers are more likely to feel compelled to participate in green consumerism due to societal pressure (Schultz et al., 2005).

**Role of influencers and media:** Social media influencers, environmental campaigns, and celebrity endorsements can exert significant influence on consumers' perceptions of social norms surrounding green consumerism (Moser, 2015).

**Hypothesis 2:** Consumers who perceive stronger social pressure to engage in green consumerism from significant others or societal norms are more likely to make environmentally responsible purchasing decisions.

## 3. Perceived Behavioral Control

Perceived behavioral control refers to the consumer's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing a particular behavior, influenced by internal and external factors.

**Economic factors:** The ability of the consumers to spend on eco-friendly products plays a critical role in green consumption. Green products are perceived as too expensive, perceived behavioral control may be lower (Thøgersen, 2005).

**Availability and accessibility of green options:** The extent to which consumers have access to sustainable or environmentally friendly products affects their perceived control over their choices. If green products are readily available in local stores or online, consumers may feel more confident in their ability to make sustainable purchases (Peattie, 2010).

**Knowledge and education:** Consumer knowledge about sustainability issues, eco-labeling, and the environmental impact of products can increase perceived control over their consumption choices. Educated consumers may be more aware of the environmental costs of products and more confident in their ability to make informed decisions.

**Hypothesis 3:** Consumers who perceive that they have control over their ability to purchase green products due to factors like availability, affordability, or knowledge are more likely to engage in green consumerism.

## 4. Intention to Engage in Green Consumerism

The intention to perform a behavior is the most immediate predictor of actual behavior, this refers to a consumer's intention to purchase eco-friendly products, adopt sustainable consumption patterns, or reduce their environmental footprint. The intention to engage in green consumerism is a result of attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behaviour.

Consumers with more positive attitudes towards sustainable products are more likely to purchase them (Tanner & Wölfling Kast, 2003). If consumers perceive greater social support or pressure to act sustainably, they are more likely to engage in green consumerism (Schultz et al., 2005). When consumers have the ability to adopt sustainably, they would engage in green consumerism (Ajzen, 1991).

**Hypothesis 4:** Consumers with positive attitudes, strong social pressure, and high perceived behavioral control are more likely to intend to engage in green consumerism.

### 5. Actual Green Consumer Behavior

Actual behavior refers to the real-world decision to purchase green products or adopt other sustainable consumption behaviors. Actual behavior is predicted by **intention** and **perceived behavioral control**. Factors like product availability, price, or situational constraints influence the intended behavior. **External constraints** as high prices, lack of availability, or time constraints may delay consumers from converting their intentions into actual behavior (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). **Situational factors** like financial difficulties may reverse the intention to engage in green consumption (Lindenberg, 2011).

**Hypothesis 5:** Consumers with strong intentions to engage in green consumerism are more likely to follow through with their intentions, provided that external barriers like price or availability.

### Managerial implications, Conclusion and scope for further research

Green consumerism is a growing phenomenon that is shaped by a complex interplay of psychological, social, and economic factors. While it is driven by environmental awareness, social influence, and corporate responsibility, it faces significant challenges, including greenwashing, cost barriers, and consumer inertia. The rise of digital media and e-commerce has provided new opportunities for promoting sustainable consumption, particularly through the influence of social media and online communities. Addressing the barriers to green consumerism and trust in sustainability claims will be key to ensuring that sustainable consumption.

Social media platforms, influencers, and e-commerce technologies are central to spreading awareness about sustainability and encouraging ethical consumption. However, while there is considerable momentum toward green consumerism, challenges remain, particularly in addressing issues of greenwashing and ensuring sustainability claims. The role of emerging technologies like AI and VR in enhancing consumer engagement is important, as consumers increasingly demand greater transparency and sustainability. It is clear that the future lies in ethical, eco-conscious approach to production and consumption.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour provides a framework for understanding the psychological and social factors that drive green consumerism. Examining attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, helps to understand consumers engagement in environmentally responsible behaviors, and how marketers, policymakers, and sustainability advocates can encourage green consumerism. Future research could expand this model by incorporating external factors like economic conditions, cultural norms and exploring the role of digital media and influencers in shaping green consumer behavior.

### References

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179-211.
- Bamberg, S., & Möser, G. (2007). Twenty years after Hines, Hungerford, and Tomera: A new meta-analysis of psycho-social determinants of pro-environmental behavior. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 27(1), 14-25.
- Chan, R. Y. K. (2001). Determinants of Chinese consumers' green purchase behavior. *Psychology & Marketing*, 18(4), 389-413.

- Cialdini, R. B., Reno, R. R., & Kallgren, C. A. (1990). A focus theory of normative conduct: Recycling the concept of norms to reduce littering in public places. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 58(6), 1015–1026. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.58.6.1015>
  - Dangelico, R. M., & Vocalelli, D. (2017). “Green Marketing”: An Analysis of Definitions, Strategy Steps, and Tools through a Systematic Review of the Literature. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 165, 1263-1279.
  - Delmas, M. A., & Burbano, V. C. (2011). The drivers of greenwashing. *California Management Review*, 54(1), 64-87.
  - Joshi, Y., & Rahman, Z. (2015) Factors Affecting Green Purchase Behaviour and Future Research Directions. *June 2015 Technology Analysis and Strategic Management* 3(2) DOI: 10.1016/j.ism.2015.04.001
  - Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 59-68.
  - Kolk, A. (2003). Trends in Sustainability Reporting by the Fortune Global 250. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 12, 279-291. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.370>
  - Lindenberg, S. (2011). Green consumerism: A radical alternative. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 31(3), 304-313.
  - Luchs, M. G., Naylor, R. W., Irwin, J. R., & Raghunathan, R. (2010). The sustainability liability: Potential negative effects of ethicality on product preference. *Journal of Marketing*, 74(5), 18-31.
  - Moser, A.K. (2015), "Thinking green, buying green? Drivers of pro-environmental purchasing behavior", *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, Vol. 32 No. 3, pp. 167-175. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCM-10-2014-1179>
  - Peattie, K. (2010). Green consumption: Behavior and norms. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 35, 195-228.
  - Schultz, P. W., Gouveia, V. V., Cameron, L. D., Tankha, G., & Schmuck, P. (2005). Values and pro-environmental behavior: A five-country survey. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 36(4), 457-475.
  - Stern, P. C., Dietz, T., & Guagnano, G. A. (1999). The new ecological paradigm in social-psychological context. *Environment and Behavior*, 23(5), 727-743.
  - Tanner, C. and Kast, S.W. (2003) Promoting Sustainable Consumption Determinants of Green Purchases by Swiss Consumers. *Psychology and Marketing*, 20, 883-902. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/mar.10101>
  - Thøgersen, J. (2014). Unsustainable consumption. *The MIT Press*.
  - Vermeir, I., & Verbeke, W. (2006). Sustainable Food Consumption: Exploring the Consumer “Attitude-Behavioral Intention” Gap. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics*, 19, 169-194. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10806-005-5485-3>
- Herman Fassou Haba, Christophe Bredillet, Omkar Dastane, (2023) Green consumer research: Trends and way forward based on bibliometric analysis, *Cleaner and Responsible Consumption*, Volume 8, 100089, ISSN 2666-7843, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clrc.2022.100089>.
- Naini, S.R. and Reddy, M.R. (2024), "Role of green awareness and green behaviour in fostering sustainable consumption in India", *Journal of Science and Technology Policy Management*, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSTPM-11-2022-0182>