European Journal of Business and Management
ISSN 2222-1905 (Paper) ISSN 2222-2839 (Online)
Vol.16, No.4, 2024

Factors Influencing Green Purchase Intention Among Consumers in Mongolia

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Abstract
The aim of this study is to investigate the factors influencing on Mongolian consumer green purchase intention. Specifically, this study is intended to examine whether factors such as consumer attitudes, subjective norms, environmental knowledge, governmental policies toward green development, eco-labeling, and willingness to pay premium price for green products influence consumers' intention to buy eco-friendly and green products. Studying and understanding these factors are vital and crucial for developing policies and strategies implemented by governmental and business organization to encourage green consumption among consumers. The survey included 346 randomly selected samples representing Ulaanbaatar residents, and quantitative analysis was conducted using the SPSS 23 software. The results show that social influence groups, eco-labels, and willingness to pay higher prices for green products significantly influence consumers' intention to make environmentally conscious purchases, while attitudes and environmental awareness have a less marked impact.

Keywords: *green purchase intention, attitudes, subjective norms, environmental knowledge, eco-labeling, governmental policy, willingness to pay*

DOI: 10.7176/EJBM/16-4-06
Publication date: May 30th 2024

1. Introduction

In the contemporary era, the noticeable effects of climate change and environmental degradation have become increasingly evident (Kumar, 2014). This pattern can be seen worldwide, leading an increasing number of countries to recognize the necessity of adopting sustainable practices and promoting the adoption of eco-friendly consumption habits and behaviors (Lavuri et al., 2023; María De Los M et al., 2024). The rapidly expanding threats which is facing the global ecosystem and arising from a confluence of factors including population growth, excessive demand, excessive production and the looming specter of resource scarcity are complex.

The perpetuation of production and consumption poses notable dangers to the both of environment and human health. The persistent use of methods increases the risk of worsening harm and accelerating the exhaustion of essential resources. Consequently, this may lead to outcomes such as habitat destruction, loss of biodiversity and reduced ecosystem services ultimately putting the Earths ability to support life at risk (Business Consultant, Auckland, New Zealand & Tharian, 2023; Rist et al., 2014; Zohuri et al., 2022).

Within the context of this global imperative for sustainability, Mongolia stands out as an important case to study. As a developing nation, Mongolia faces its unique set of environmental challenges, ranging from land

degradation and desertification to water scarcity and air pollution. Moreover, Mongolia has the potential to contribute significantly to sustainability initiatives and efforts. The country's vast untouched natural landscapes and its rich cultural heritage highlight its capacity to lead in conservation and sustainable development (Otgonbayar et al., 2019; Volodya et al., 2018).

Numerous factors influence sustainability, and among them, consumer behavior and consumption play a significant role (María De Los M et al., 2024). Green consumption refers to the practice of making purchasing, usage, or disposal decisions based on their environmental impact, and selecting products and services that are environmentally friendly. In contrast, impulsive or unplanned purchases can lead to considerable environmental harm. This underlines the significant environmental impact associated with consumer behavior (Gallo et al., 2023).

In this regard, it is necessary to comprehensively study the factors that influence Mongolian consumers intention to buy green products. By clarifying the key motivators of consumer behavior, policymakers, businesses, and other stakeholders can create and develop tailored approaches to promote a culture of sustainability and the widespread adoption of environmentally friendly consumption patterns.

2. Literature review

2.1. Green consumption and green product

In the 1970s, the concept of "green consumption" started gaining attention in response to concerns about the environmental issues arising from excessive pollution and energy usage associated with industrial progress, despite its positive impact on the quality of life (Bian, 2020) .

Green consumption may be defined as a consumer behavior paradigm that is congruent with environmental stewardship, ensuring ecological integrity for or both current and future generations. For example, Testa and Pretner have underscored that green consumption is consumer responsibility or collective responsibility aimed at solving environmental problems through environmentally friendly behavior (Testa et al., 2021). The concept of green consumption, synonymous with sustainable consumption, is described by consumer behaviors that mitigate environmental degradation through the selection of eco-friendly products, which bolster public health by means of moderated consumption, green marketing, and health promotion. This paradigm also encompasses the management of waste and recycling, steering individuals towards environmental stewardship and the judicious use of resources and energy (Zhao et al., 2020). Furthermore, the lifecycle of green consumption can be divided into three stages: acquisition, utilization, and disposal of products.

Green products are delineated as commodities that bolster environmental protection throughout their production, utilization, and disposal phases. Characteristically, these products are organic, eco-friendly, reusable, and conducive to energy conservation (Gbadamosi, 2016). The nomenclature ‘green products’ pertains to items that garner consumer preference due to their contribution to public health, their conscientiousness regarding waste management and recycling, and their capacity to steer consumption patterns towards environmental stewardship, resource conservation, and energy efficiency (Bravo et al., 2022). Moreover, green products are acclaimed for their plethora of attributes and advantages that are instrumental in diminishing adverse environmental repercussions. They engender a favorable perception among consumers by heightening awareness of ecological matters (Mohd Suki, 2016). These explications underscore the pivotal function of green products in fostering sustainability and mitigating ecological impact across their entire life span.

2.2. Theory of Planned Behavior and green purchase intention

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) the most widely used theory in the scholarly examination of behavioral intentions and decision-making processes (Ajzen, 1991). Originating from the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Hill et al., 1977), TPB explains explains non-volitional variables, social context, and personal determinants influence people's intentions (Han & Kim, 2010). Intentions are influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and behavioral control toward an action. In other words, intention is a precursor to actual behavior. Therefore, an individual's intentions towards specific behavior become a very important element in the TPB. Intentions are considered to be important or influencing factors in the formation of behavior. It is possible to predict user behavior through desire

and determine how ready that behavior is to occur. In other words, the greater the desire that is the precursor of a certain behavior, the higher the probability of its implementation or the occurrence of that behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

2.3. Consumer attitude and green purchase intention

"Behavioral beliefs and attitudes" refer to how favorable or unfavorable a person perceives a behavior (Rustagi & Prakash, 2022). In other words, an attitude is an expression of liking or disliking something. One's attitude and one's behavior are indeed related, and if one has a positive attitude, one's behavior will also be positive (Handayani, 2017). According to Phau et al., consumers with a positive attitude towards the environment tend to buy green products (Cheah & Phau, 2011). A consumer with an environmentally positive attitude is more likely to purchase green products in the market. Also, Karekles, Carlson, and Muehling concluded in their research that consumers who believe that the product's impact on the environment is low, have a high willingness to buy those products (Kareklas et al., 2014). There is a positive relationship between consumer attitudes and the intention to purchase green products (Bouraiou et al., 2020).

2.4. Subjective norms and green purchase intention

Subjective norms are the pressures or expectations we feel from people around us, like family, friends, or coworkers, about how we should behave or what we should do. For example, according to Waqas Mazhar et al.'s research, it was emphasized that subjective norms have a strong influence on the desire to buy green and play an important role in shaping consumer behavior towards sustainable green food purchases (Mazhar et al., 2022). When consumers perceive that their "significant others" approve of green purchasing behavior, they tend to adopt it, that is, subjective norms are positively related to consumers' green purchasing intentions байна (Bong Ko & Jin, 2017; Yeon Kim & Chung, 2011).

2.5. Environmental Knowledge and green purchase intention

The acquisition of knowledge is pivotal in bringing the transformation of human behavior towards the embracement of ecologically responsible practices (Onel & Mukherjee, 2016). Environmental knowledge is a key motivator that creates environmental awareness, environmental impact, and individual environmental responsibility that leads to sustainable development (Fryxell & Lo, 2003) Furthermore, it plays an important role in all stages of the green decision-making process and is a decisive predictor of green purchase intention (Ukenna et al., 2012). Consumers equipped with an understanding of eco-friendly products, cognizant of the implications of their usage, and conversant with environmental legislations are more likely to factor in the ecological merits of products prior to consummating a purchase. In addition, environmental knowledge affects individuals' environmental attitudes (Leonidou & Leonidou, 2011). Also, the scholar Simanjuntak et al., as above, said that environmental knowledge has a significant effect on attitudes toward environmental issues, which in turn affects purchase intentions (Simanjuntak et al., 2023).

2.6. Eco-labeling and green purchase intention

Eco-labels serve as a pivotal element in the consumer decision-making process for environmentally conscious purchases (Kim & Lee, 2023; Panopoulos et al., 2023). Empirical research indicates that environmental concerns among consumers significantly shape their perception of eco-labels, thereby fostering a propensity towards the acquisition of green products (Wang et al., 2022). The augmentation of eco-labels with supplementary descriptive information has been shown to enhance the cognitive processing and purchasing intention of consumers, particularly those with limited understanding of eco-labels (Wan Mohd Noor et al., 2023). Moreover, the ease of purchase and the perceived trustworthiness of eco-labels are factors that can influence the correlation between the intention to procure eco-friendly products and the actualization of such purchases (Zaheer et al., 2023). In summation, eco-labels represent a critical informational mechanism that can effectively sway consumer behavior towards the selection of eco-friendly options, underscoring the significance of a robust eco-labeling strategy in the advancement of sustainable consumer practices.

2.7. Governmental policy and green purchase intention

It is incumbent upon governmental bodies to mitigate environmental challenges and the adverse scenarios they engender. To protect the environment, the government develops and implements various policies to accelerate sustainable development. Such policies invariably shape and influence consumers' intention to buy green products. For instance, the empirical study conducted by Wenjing Qi and colleagues in 2022, from the vantage point of consumer psychological mechanism, government behavior, and green purchase intention, unveiled that both consumer innovation and cognitive-behavioral impacts, as well as government-led environmental initiatives, significantly and positively affect green purchase intentions (Qi et al., 2022). Consequently, state policies are instrumental in influencing green purchase intentions by steering eco-protective endeavors and fostering the adoption of green consumption modalities. (Chanda et al., 2023).

2.8. Willingness to pay and green purchase intention

According to Sriwaranun et al. (2015) and Biswas (2016), the willingness to pay represents the highest amount that consumers are ready to offer in exchange for a product or service they consider to have equivalent value (Biswas, 2016; Sriwaranun et al., 2015). Research has consistently demonstrated that individuals who prioritize environmental sustainability are inclined to remunerate a premium for green products or services.

Despite the typically higher cost associated with eco-friendly offerings (Nasir, 2014), environmentally conscious consumers exhibit diminished price sensitivity (Olson, 2012), manifesting a propensity to proceed with the purchase (Nasir, 2014; Olson, 2012).

Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior and a thorough literature review, the following hypotheses were formulated. The general expectation is that:

H1: A positive consumer attitude has a significant effect on green purchase intention.
H2: Subjective norms positively influence attitude towards green purchase intention.
H3: Environmental knowledge positively influences attitude towards green purchase intention.
H4: Eco-labeling positively influences attitude towards green purchase intention.
H5:Government policy positively influences attitude towards green purchase intention.
H6: Willingness to pay positively influences attitude towards green purchase intention.

The theoretical model proposed for this research study is depicted in Figure 1. This model framework includes the green purchase intention of consumer, which includes attitude, Subjective norms, Environmental knowledge, Eco-labeling, Government policy, as well as Willingness to pay.

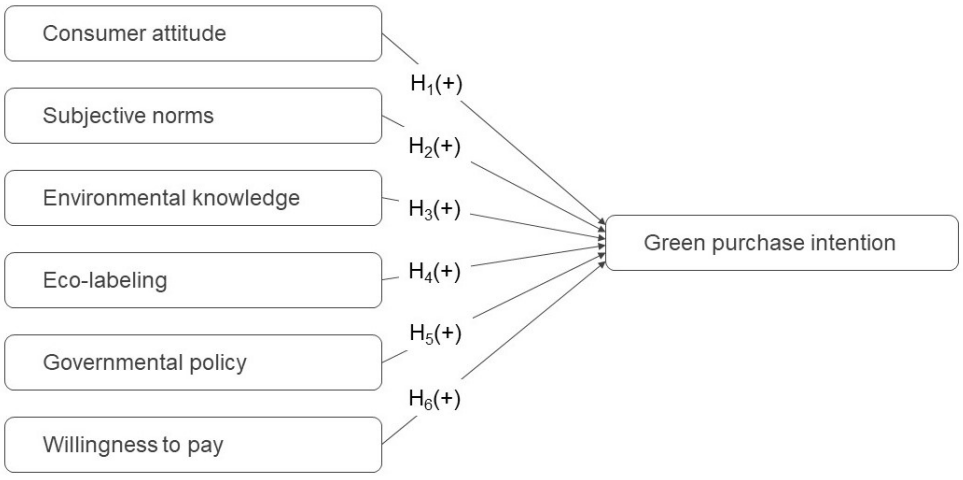


Figure 1. Research model

3. Research methodology

3.1. Sampling and Data Analysis

The research was conducted utilizing primary data, adhering to Sekaran's (1983) guidelines. A randomized selection of 300 or more participants was surveyed using a standardized questionnaire with closed-ended questions. Data collection occurred between January and February 2024, involving 346 participants in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. The data gathering process employed a questionnaire with 33 items, each rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), and analyzed using SPSS version 25.0. An online survey tool was utilized for data collection, which was disseminated via Google Forms after ensuring its validity and reliability. The analysis included Pearson's correlation coefficient to examine the relationships between selected variables.

The survey collected demographic data from 346 individuals, comprising 33.5% males and 66.5% females. Age distribution was as follows: 31.8% aged 16-25, 26.9% aged 26-35, 20.8% aged 36-45, 16.8% aged 46-55, and 3.8% aged over 56. Educational attainment showed 23.9% with high school diplomas, 3.8% with college education, and 76.1% with a bachelor's degree or higher. The majority of participants were employed (73.7%), followed by students or pupils (16.8%), and a minority of retired, unemployed, or others (9.5%). Regarding income, 63.3% reported a household monthly income of 3 million MNT[1] or less, while 36.7% earned more than 3 million MNT.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents for Green Products.

Total numbers of respondents (n=346)		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	116	33.5
	Female	230	66.5
Age, years	16-25	110	31.8
	26-35	93	26.9
	36-45	72	20.8
	46-55	58	16.8
	Above 56	13	3.8
Education	Junior high school or below	14	4.0
	Senior high school	69	19.9
	College diploma	13	3.8
	Above than bachelor's degree	250	72.3
Occupation	Public sector employee	53	15.3
	Company employee	157	45.4
	Self-employee	45	13.0
	Student / Pupil	58	16.8
	Retired	9	2.6
	Unemployed	13	3.8
	Others	11	3.2
Household monthly income (thousand MNT)	1000 or under	54	15.6
	1000 - 2000	92	26.6
	2000 - 3000	73	21.1
	3000 - 4000	50	14.5
	4000 - 5000	30	8.7
	5000 – 6000	18	5.2
	Above than 6000	29	8.4

Source: Primary data, 2024.02

4. Result and discussion

4.1. Validity and Reliability

The study's instruments' reliability was ascertained through a comprehensive reliability assessment. The findings revealed that the scales' reliability coefficients ranged from **0.922 to 0.956**. With all variables exhibiting reliability greater than **0.7**, the results are deemed both acceptable and robust. The Cronbach's alpha for the seven constructs under investigation consistently exceeded **0.9**, reflecting substantial internal consistency. Additionally, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure was employed to evaluate the sample's adequacy. The KMO values for each construct surpassed the accepted threshold of **0.6**, underscoring the sample's appropriateness for the analysis.

[1] The currency in Mongolia is referred to as the Mongolian Tugrik (MNT).

Table 2. Results of the Reliability Analysis

Coding	Variables	N of Items	KMO	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
CA	Consumer attitude	4	.848	.937
SN	Subjective norms	5	.882	.929
EK	Environmental knowledge	6	.906	.956
EL	Eco-labeling	6	.889	.922
GP	Governmental policy	4	.859	.954
WTP	Willingness to pay	3	.753	.926
GPI	Green Purchase Intention	5	.905	.951

Source: Authors' calculations.
Note: If KMO value > 0.7, then statistically valid, if Cronbach's alpha > 0.7, then statistically valid.

The statistical examination of the interrelationships among variables was conducted using Pearson correlation analysis. The analysis identified the highest correlation coefficient between the constructs of consumer attitude and environmental knowledge, with a value of (r = .862, p < .01). Furthermore, the coefficients ranged from (0.587) to (0.862), indicating statistically significant associations across all variables. The scrutiny of the correlation matrix was pivotal, as the potential for multicollinearity is a concern when variables exhibit high correlation ((r > .80)) as noted by Hair (F. Hair Jr et al., 2014). The bivariate correlations among the variables were systematically analyzed, as delineated in Table 3. The empirical evidence corroborates the assertions of Arvola et al. (2008) and Dowd & Burke (2013), demonstrating a positive correlation between consumer attitude and the intention to purchase organic products (Arvola et al., 2008; Dowd & Burke, 2013).

Table 3. Correlation Coefficient between variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. CA	1						
2. SN	0.817	1					
3. EK	0.862	0.800	1				
4. EL	0.652	0.667	0.638	1			
5. GP	0.658	0.608	0.665	0.678	1		
6. WTP	0.607	0.621	0.587	0.732	0.674	1	
7. GPI	0.719	0.724	0.697	0.799	0.747	0.856	1

Notes: p value is significant at the 1% level.

The findings demonstrate that the Composite Reliability (CR) for all constructs was observed to be within the range of **0.799 to 0.902**, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) spanned from **0.444 to 0.605**. These metrics satisfy the established benchmarks for convergent validity as delineated by Hair et al. (2016). Furthermore, Hair et al. (2017) posits that for the affirmation of internal consistency, a CR value exceeding **0.70** and an AVE value surpassing **0.50** are indicative of adequate convergent validity. The outcomes pertaining to the validity of the constructs are systematically presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Convergent validity

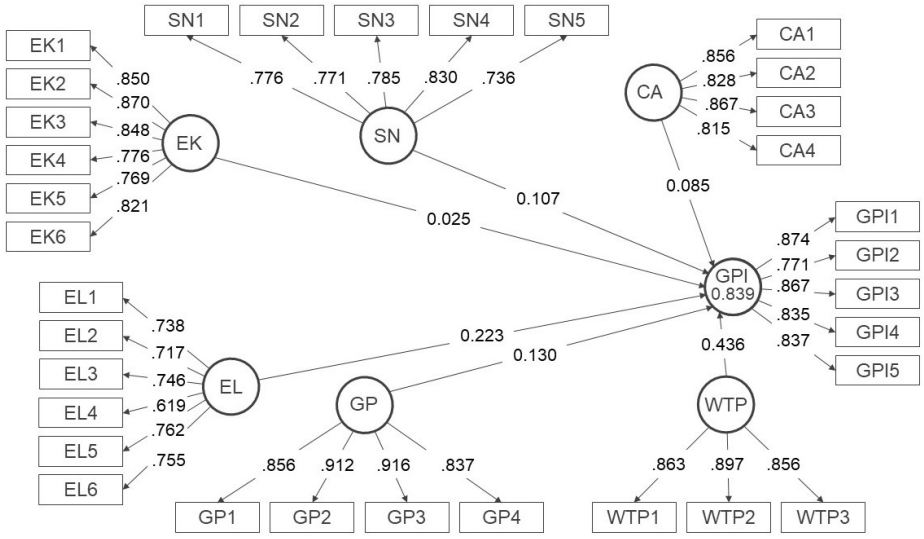
Variables	Items	Mean	SD	CR	AVE
Consumer attitude (CA)	CA1	3.94	1.05	.842	.572
	CA2	3.94	1.05		
	CA3	3.78	1.11		
	CA4	4.00	1.10		
Subjective norms (SN)	SN1	3.77	1.08	.833	.501
	SN2	3.55	1.11		
	SN3	3.36	1.14		
	SN4	3.27	1.15		
	SN5	3.40	1.17		
Environmental knowledge (EK)	EK1	3.59	1.14	.902	.605
	EK2	3.77	1.11		
	EK3	3.85	1.11		
	EK4	3.86	1.11		
	EK5	3.60	1.15		
	EK6	3.62	1.11		
Eco-labeling (EL)	EL1	3.64	1.10	.852	.490
	EL2	3.34	1.01		
	EL3	3.42	1.03		
	EL4	3.28	1.04		
	EL5	3.15	1.12		
	EL6	3.42	1.06		
Governmental policy (GP)	GP1	3.45	1.10	.826	.543
	GP2	3.61	1.20		
	GP3	3.68	1.17		
	GP4	3.68	1.15		
Willingness to pay (WTP)	WTP1	3.71	1.14	.800	.572
	WTP2	3.33	1.10		
	WTP3	3.32	1.08		
Green Purchase Intention (GPI)	GPI1	3.46	1.10	.799	.444
	GPI2	3.57	1.02		
	GPI3	3.53	1.04		
	GPI4	3.52	1.08		
	GPI5	3.49	1.03		

Source: Authors' calculations. Note: FL = factor loading, CR = composite reliability, AVE = average variance extracted.

4.2 Results of the Path Analysis

The dataset underwent a rigorous examination through the application of structural equation modeling (SEM) utilizing the SPSS 25.0 platform. In a similar vein, SEM was employed to scrutinize the interrelations among the variables. The path coefficient analysis, instrumental for hypothesis evaluation, is systematically delineated in Table 5. The SEM outcomes lend support to all the postulated hypotheses, with the exception of H1 and H3, as evidenced by path coefficients that are statistically significant ($t>1.96, p<0.05$). Notably, the propensity to spend emerged as the most potent predictor of green purchase intentions (H6, $\beta=0.464$). Additionally, the impact of eco-labeling on green purchase intentions (H4) was found to be substantial ($\beta=0.210$). Moreover, governmental policies were observed to exert a favorable influence on green purchase intentions (H5, $\beta=0.148$). Lastly, subjective norms were identified as having a significantly positive direct effect on green purchase intentions (H2, $\beta=0.113$).

Figure 2. Measurement assessment model



Note: Path coefficient and R-square result

Table 5. Path analysis

	Path	Estimate	β	*t*-Value	*p*-Value	Result
H_1	CA => GPI	0.085	0.089	1.837	.067	Not supported
H_2	SN => GPI	0.107	0.113	2.689	.008	Supported
H_3	EK => GPI	0.025	0.026	0.567	.571	Not supported
H_4	EL => GPI	0.223	0.210	5.752	.000	Supported
H_5	GP => GPI	0.130	0.148	4.310	.000	Supported
H_6	WTP => GPI	0.436	0.464	13.303	.000	Supported

Source: Authors' calculations.

The objective of this investigation was to elucidate the determinants that shape the green purchasing propensities among consumers in Mongolia. This study probed into the influence exerted by various factors, namely consumer attitude, subjective norms, environmental awareness, eco-labeling, governmental policies, and the willingness to pay for eco-friendly or green products. The analysis revealed that a substantial 84 percent of the variance in the green consumer intention variable (R2=0.839) could be accounted for by these independent variables.

Conclusion

This research encapsulated in six hypotheses is delved into the nexus between consumer attitude, subjective norms, environmental knowledge, eco-labeling, governmental policy, willingness to pay and the intention to purchase green products. The empirical evidence garnered from this research indicates that subjective norms, eco-labeling, governmental policy and willingness to pay have exerted a significant and positive impact on the intention of Mongolian consumers to purchase green products. The association between subjective norms and the intention to purchase green products is positively correlated, thereby substantiating Hypothesis H2. The findings further reveal that eco-labeling positively correlates with green purchase intention, affirming Hypothesis H4. This suggests an increased propensity to purchase products with eco-labeling. The study also underscores the

Mongolian consumer's environmental knowledge, as reflected in their purchasing behaviors. Additionally, governmental policy is observed to positively influence purchasing decisions; consumer inclination towards green products is heightened when governmental support for the environment is evident. The analysis identifies willingness to pay as the most influential determinant on the intention to purchase green products among Mongolian consumers, corroborating Hypotheses H5 and H6. Conversely, consumer attitude and environmental knowledge did not exhibit a significant effect on green purchase intention, leading to the non-confirmation of Hypotheses H1 and H3. This implies that these factors do not moderate the relationship between consumer attitude, environmental knowledge, and purchase intention.

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