



The Influence of Environmental Consciousness and Environmental Attitude on Green Purchase Intention: the Moderating Effect of Price Sensitivity

Dr. Mahmoud Ahmad Alhomssi^{1*}, Alaa Eldin Abass Ali²

^{1*}*Faculty of Business Administration, Beirut Arab University, Lebanon.*

²*Professor, Faculty of Business Administration, Beirut Arab University, Lebanon.*

Corresponding Email: ^{1}mahmoudalhomssi@gmail.com*

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Abstract: *This paper aims to explore the relationship between environmental consciousness and environmental attitude and green purchase intention in Lebanon. Moreover, this study analyzes the moderate effect of price sensitivity on the relationship. To meet the aims of the present study, a quantitative research approach is used, with data from 150 respondents analyzed. The findings of this study reveal a positive effect of environmental consciousness and environmental attitude on green purchase intention. Similarly, the outcome demonstrates that price sensitivity negatively moderates the relationship between environmental consciousness and environmental attitude on the desire to make green purchases. This study informs marketers about the critical elements affecting green buying intention and adds to the body of research in the field of marketing on the aspects influencing green purchase intention.*

Keywords: *Environmental Consciousness, Environmental Attitude, Price Sensitivity, Green Purchase Intention, Lebanon.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a lot of discussion on green purchasing behavior (Mishal et al., 2017). Environmental knowledge (Durif, 2011, Aman et al., 2012; Joshi & Rahman, 2015), environmental consciousness (Yadav & Pathak, 2016), environmental responsibility (Nyborg et al., 2006), environmental attitude (Yadav & Pathak, 2016), price sensitivity (Hsu et al., 2017), and environmental concern (Kalafatis et al., 1999) are some of the factors that influence consumers' intentions to make green purchases, according to recent studies. Furthermore, previous studies have demonstrated how important price sensitivity is in moderating the association between certain environmental characteristics and inclinations to make green purchases (Wang et al., 2020).



In light of environmental issues like pollution and global warming, consumers are more conscious of how their consuming activities affect the environment and are more inclined to modify their purchasing decisions and shaping habits in an effort to protect the environment (Lyon and Maxwell, 2004). Lebanon is currently facing some environmental issues such as deforestation, endangered agriculture, soil erosion, air pollution, river and marine pollution, and soil degradation (Masri, 1997; Dagher & Itani, 2012; Hussein & Shams, 2017).

Studies on green consumption have progressed significantly in the last several years (Yue et al., 2020). Peer influence (Lee, 2010), perceived behavioral control (Wang et al., 2013), and the green marketing mix (Hussein & Shams, 2017) are the main topics of current research on green purchase intention. However, environmental consciousness and the influence of price sensitivity to moderate the relationship between environmental factors and green purchasing behavior have received less attention in previous research. Moreover, Western nations have been the primary study sites for studies on green purchasing behavior (Lee et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2013; Pratiwi et al., 2018; Ansu-Mensah, 2021). Nevertheless, little research has been conducted on the environmental variables influencing green purchasing behavior in developing countries such as Lebanon. Furthermore, the theory of planned behavior is used in the current investigation. Consequently, the study's findings offer empirical support for the revalidation of the aforementioned theory.

In a similar vein, this study's conclusions aid in the understanding of the variables influencing green purchasing behavior by policymakers, marketers, and corporate executives. Additionally, Lebanese marketing and business managers will have a better grasp of the country's pricing sensitivity to green products, according to the study's findings. Moreover, the results of this study will assist Lebanese marketers in comprehending consumer behavior and Lebanese perceptions of environmentally friendly products. Lastly, this study offers recommendations on how to encourage environmentally friendly consumption practices for managers and the government. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of environmental attitude and environmental consciousness on green buying intention in Lebanon. Furthermore, the moderate influence of price sensitivity on the relationship between environmental attitude, environmental consciousness, and green buying intention is explored in this study. This study is going to address the gaps that exist in the green marketing literature, which is considered one of the few empirical studies that investigate the effect of environmental attitude and environmental consciousness on green buying behavior in Lebanon. Additionally, by examining the moderating role of price sensitivity among the examined variables, this study advances our knowledge and deepens our understanding of the determinants influencing green buying behavior.

2. RELATED WORKS

2.1 Green Purchase Intention

Purchase intentions is defined as consumers attitudes and desire that have toward items and are made up of their perceptions of the brand and level of confidence which drives the purchase of product (Laksmi & Wardana, 2015). Karatu & Mat (2014) defined green purchase intention as people's propensity and desire to favor brands of goods and services



that are environmentally friendly when making purchases. Rashid (2009) characterizes green buying intentions as the likelihood and desire of an individual to choose green items over conventional ones while making a purchase.

2.2 Theory of Planned Behavior

The theory of planned behavior is the extended theory of the previous one of reasoned action (TRA), which held that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are the three factors that impact an individual's behavioral intention (Hill et al., 1977). In order to understand the connection between environmental attitude and green purchase intention, this study employs the theory of planned behavior.

2.3 The Effect of Environmental Consciousness on Green Purchase Intentions

The idea of environmental consciousness refers to one's willingness to make changes to one's own surroundings. The impact of environmental consciousness on the desire to purchase green items has been the subject of several studies (Lin & Huang, 2012; Ariffin et al., 2016; Hamm & Gronefeld, 2004). Lin and Huang (2012) suggest that cultivating environmental consciousness necessitates a gradual shift in purchasing behaviors. Consequently, the researchers argued that it is important to observe the relationship between environmental consciousness and purchase intention. According to Ariffin et al. (2016), there is a positive relationship between environmental consciousness and the desire to buy green items. Hamm & Gronefeld (2004) argued that since ecologically friendly items have less of an influence on the environment, people are more likely to acquire them, according to research by Hamm & Gronefeld (2004). According to Wang et al. (2020), buying intentions for organic food are positively impacted by environmental consciousness. Hence, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H1: Environmental consciousness has a positive effect on green purchase intention.

2.4 The Effect of Environmental Attitude on Green Purchase Intentions

Environmental attitude, defined as an individual's favorable or negative assessment of their own performance, especially with regard to environmental behavior, is referred to as their environmental attitude (Ajzen & Madden, 1980). According to Ajzen & Fishbein's (1980) theory, a person's attitude directly influences their behavioral intention, making environmental attitude one of the key factors in determining a consumer's propensity to make green product purchases. Lynne & Rola (1988) claimed that environmental attitudes positively influence ecological activity. According to Mostafa (2009), attitudes significantly influenced consumers' decisions to buy ecologically friendly products. Consumer purchasing behavior for the environment and becoming green is most strongly influenced by environmental attitudes (Beckford et al. 2010, Cornelissen et al. 2008). Yadav and Pathak (2016) assert that consumers' purchases of environmentally friendly items are directly impacted by their attitudes about the environment. As a result, this study suggests the following:

H2: Environmental attitude has a positive effect on green purchase intention.

2.5 The Moderating Effect of Price Sensitivity

Price sensitivity is the degree to which customers respond differently to changes in the product's (or service's) price (Lichtenstein et al., 1993; Stall-Meadows & Davey, 2013). A substantial body of research indicates that price sensitivity is a direct and indirect antecedent of the desire to purchase an ecologically friendly product (Stall-Meadows & Davey, 2013; Hahnel et al., 2014). Hsu et al. (2017) found that one important element impacting purchase intentions was price sensitivity. Prior research found that price sensitivity had a negative, moderate influence on the relationship between environmental characteristics such as environmental responsibility, environmental concern, environmental consciousness, and green purchasing intentions (Wang et al., 2020; Yue et al., 2020). Nonetheless, the moderate impact of price sensitivity on the relationship between environmental attitude and green purchase intention has not been thoroughly studied in much research; thus, this study contributes to clarifying the moderate influence of price sensitivity on the relationship between environmental attitude and green purchase intention. Hence, this study hypothesizes the following:

H3a: Price sensitivity negatively moderates the relationship between environmental consciousness and green purchase intention.

H3b: Price sensitivity negatively moderates the relationship between environmental attitude and green purchase intention

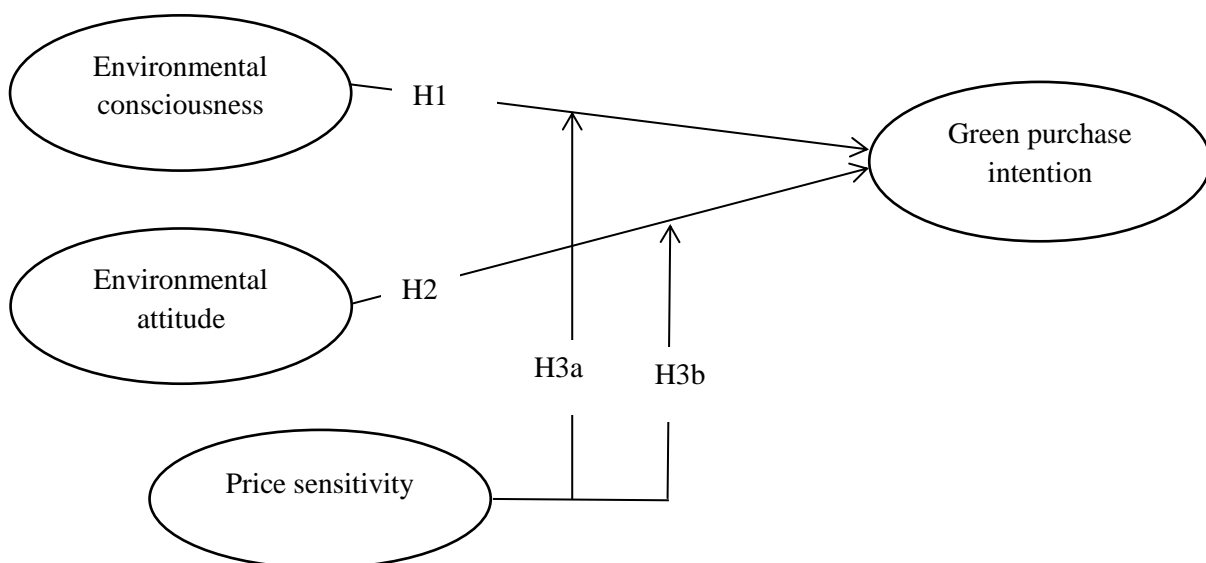


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design and Sampling

This study looks into the relationship between environmental consciousness, environmental attitude, and green purchasing intention in the context of Lebanon. Similarly, the present study aims to elucidate the role that price sensitivity plays in moderating the relationship. To accomplish the present study goals, a quantitative research technique was adopted, and data



were obtained using the snowball sampling technique from Lebanese respondents who are familiar with green products and make regular purchases of green or eco-friendly products using a face-to-face survey design, a phone call method, and an online data collection method that involved sharing links via email and other various social media platforms, such as Messenger and Instagram. The sample size that completed the questionnaires was 150 out of 260, accounting for 57% of the response rate.

3.2 Measurement Instrument

The five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree to strongly agree" was adjusted for this research measuring instrument scale based on previous studies. First, this instrument was distributed to a number of professionals to obtain comments on its validity. The research instrument scales were then adjusted based on their ideas and suggestions. Environmental consciousness measurement questions were based on three items and were adapted from Park et al. (2013). Moreover, the environmental attitude construct was adapted from Maichum et al. (2016) and was based on three metrics. Likewise, two items from Hsu et al. (2017) served as the foundation for the price sensitivity measure. Finally, green purchasing intention is assessed using a three-item scale adapted from Mark & Law (2015).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The data was analyzed using the IBM SPSS AMOS 26 program. Demographic information about the respondents, such as their age, gender, marital status, income, and level of education, was also collected for additional research. Using SPSS's frequency analysis, descriptive statistics of consumer demographic data were conducted.

Table 1: Demographic profile

Attribute	Value	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	92	61
	Male	58	39
	Total	150	100
Age	Less than /18/ years	11	7
	Between /18/ and /25/	76	51
	Between /26/ and /35/	45	30
	Between /36/ and /46/	8	5
	Above /46/ years	10	7
	Total	150	100
Marital status	Single	74	49
	Married	68	45
	Divorced	5	3
	Widowed	3	2



	Total	150	100
Education	High School	16	11
	Bachelor degree	128	85
	Master degree	6	4
	PhD degree	0	0
	Total	150	100
Monthly income	Less than 500\$	111	74
	Between 500\$ and 1000\$	39	26
	Between 1001\$ and 5000\$	0	0
	Above 5000\$	0	0
	Total	150	100

Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics data, revealing that 61% of respondents in this survey were female and 39% were male. The majority of respondents (51%) were between the ages of 18 and 25, followed by those aged 26 to 35 (30%) and 36 to 46 (5%). Among the respondents, 49% were single, with 45% married. Consumers with a bachelor's degree accounted for 85% of the total sample, followed by those with a master's degree (4%), and those with a high school diploma (11%). The bulk of clients (74%) earn less than \$500 each month.

4.2 Measurement Model Evaluation

In this work, the measuring model's findings were assessed using Cronbach's alpha (CA), composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) for all components.

Table 2 Result of measurement model.

Construct	Variable Code	Factors Loading	AVE	CR
Environmental Consciousness	EC1	0.56	0.5	0.748
	EC2	0.86		
	EC3	0.68		
Environmental Attitude	EA1	0.71	0.547	0.782
	EA2	0.684		
	EA3	0.819		
Price Sensitivity	PS1	0.621	0.508	0.67
	PS2	0.794		
Green Purchase Intention	GPI1	0.673	0.524	0.763
	GPI2	0.611		
	GPI3	0.864		



As indicated in Table 2, the factor loading of all items was greater than 0.5, and the average variance extracted values for each construct were above the cut-off criterion of 0.5, implying that convergent validity was confirmed. Similarly, the total composite reliability values for all variables exceeded the 0.7 criterion set by Hair et al. (2017). This research was also examined. The results support the study's constructs' consistency, dependability, and reliability.

4.3 Hypotheses Testing, and Results

This study investigates the factors that influence green consumption behavior in Lebanon. These factors include environmental consciousness and an environmental attitude. Furthermore, this study investigates the moderating role of price sensitivity in the relationship between the analyzed variables. The direct and indirect relationships between the variables are shown in Table 3.

Table 4 Structural Relationships and Hypotheses Testing

	Relationship			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Hypothesis
H1	EC.	→	GPI	0.42	0.076	3.475	***	Supported
H2	EA	→	GPI	0.644	0.067	8.687	***	Supported

P***= ≤ 0.001

EC: Environmental consciousness

EA: Environmental attitude

GPI: Green purchase intention

Table 3 displays the variables' direct correlations. Environmental consciousness positively impacts green purchasing intention ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.001$), supporting hypothesis 1. The results also show that environmental attitudes positively impact green purchasing intention ($\beta = 0.644, p < 0.001$) and green consumption ($\beta = 0.644, p < 0.001$), supporting H2.

4.2.2 Testing the Moderating Relationships

The last two hypotheses hypothesize that price sensitivity may mediate the association between environmental consciousness, environmental attitude, and green purchasing intention. As shown in Table 4, the statistical analysis demonstrated a moderate negative influence of price sensitivity on the link between environmental consciousness, environmental attitude, and green purchasing intention, thus supporting H3a and H3b.

Table 4 Moderation of price sensitivity

		Coefficients ^a				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.23	0.126		9.142	0



	EC	0.265	0.034	0.287	4.56	***
	PS*EC	0.011	0.047	0.014	0.74	***
2	(Constant)	6.32	0.614		13.11	0
	EA	0.674	0.047	0.544	9.54	***
	PS*EA	-0.0143	0.047	-0.0125	0.97	***
a. Dependent Variable: GPI						

Table 4 shows a significant and positive relationship between environmental consciousness and green purchase intention when price sensitivity is constant ($\beta = 0.265$, $p = <0.001$). Though the interaction of price sensitivity had a moderately negative impact on the relationship ($\beta = -0.0143$, $p = <0.001$). This supports H3a. Likewise, the relationship between environmental attitude and green purchase intention was significant and positive when price sensitivity was kept constant ($\beta = 0.674$, $p = <0.001$). However, the interaction of price sensitivity had a significant negative moderate impact on the relationship ($\beta = -0.0143$, $p = <0.001$), supporting H3b.

To sum it all up, this study looked at the link between environmental consciousness, environmental attitude, and green purchase intention in Lebanon. Furthermore, this study investigates the moderating role of price sensitivity in the link between the predictor factors and green purchasing intention. This study found that environmental consciousness positively influences green purchasing intention ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.001$). The positive relationship between environmental consciousness and green buying intention validates Wang et al.'s (2020) findings. This might be read as shoppers in Lebanon are aware of environmental concerns and are comfortable purchasing products that are less harmful to the environment. Furthermore, the results of this study revealed a positive relationship between environmental attitude and green purchase intention ($\beta = 0.644$, $p < 0.001$). This finding validates previous research (Mostafa, 2009; Ng & Law, 2015). The beneficial influence of environmental attitude on green purchase intention can be interpreted in terms of personal appraisal and belief, which motivate customers to buy green items. Finally, the study's findings show that price sensitivity has a negative effect on the interaction between environmental factors such as environmental consciousness, environmental attitude, and green consumption behavior. This conclusion is consistent with earlier investigations (Wang et al., 2020; Yue et al., 2020). These findings suggest that consumers in Lebanon are influenced by the present economic crisis, which reduces their green purchasing intentions.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The outcomes of this investigation have several theoretical implications. First, empirical research on green purchasing intentions in Lebanon is very limited. Thus, this study contributes to the literature on green marketing by examining the importance of environmental consciousness and environmental attitude in understanding green customers' actions under the present exceptional economic circumstances in Lebanon. Similarly, the current study is founded on the theory of planned behavior (Hill et al., 1977). In this context, the study's findings support the theory of planned behavior, which states that an individual's



behavior is proximally influenced by attitudes, subjective standards, and perceived behavioral control. Furthermore, this research helps to better understand the link between environmental consciousness, environmental attitude, and green purchasing intentions. This study also contributes to the corpus of green marketing literature by examining the moderating influence of price sensitivity on the relationship between environmental consciousness, environmental attitude, and green purchase intention. According to the findings, the conclusions of this study are useful to policymakers, retailers, and marketers to comprehend the effects that environmental consciousness and attitude contribute to green purchase intention in Lebanon. Likewise, this research will help policymakers, merchants, and the government understand the miserable effect of price sensitivity, which mitigates the drive for green buying intentions. Hence, to increase green purchase intention, governments may incorporate environmental education into the national education system, instilling the environmental value of properly managing the interaction between humans and nature. In addition, governments should raise environmental awareness among consumers using a variety of communication platforms, including television and social media, by highlighting the current environmental challenges. Furthermore, the government should reduce tariffs on imported green products while encouraging industrial sectors to focus on green materials when making green products and enact legislation to require residents to use green commodities. On the other hand, marketers should set a fair green price and create a cost-effective strategy for green products by inventing low-cost green items with comparable performance. Finally, like with all research, this study had limitations. These limits should be considered. First, the current study was conducted in Lebanon, which limits its generalizability. Furthermore, Lebanon is now experiencing a difficult economic situation that limits the breadth of the investigation. The survey methodology should be replicated in another era of stable economic conditions to further understand Lebanese citizens' genuine perspectives. Furthermore, this study used a snowball sampling approach, which limits its generalizability. To further evaluate the link between the factors, future studies might use a different sample strategy.

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