Examining the Theory of Planned Behaviour in Green Purchasing Behaviour – A Case of Millennial's Consumption of Organic Food

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Abstract

The study aimed to better understand how millennials' attitudes, buying intentions, and behavior related to green products with the help of the theory of planned behavior. The research also looked at the function of green purchase intentions (GPI), a subjective norm (SN), in mediating the affiliation between attitudes toward green products (AGP), perceived control behavior, and green purchasing behavior (GPB). The data was gathered from 256 millennials from Pakistan's twin cities using a well-structured questionnaire. The Smart PLS computer application was used to examine the data using the partial least squares (PLS) method. It was discovered that AGP, arbitrary standards, and perceived behavioral control have a beneficial impact on GPI. Additionally, the results revealed that GPI had a notable impact on GPB. The interaction between AGP and GPB was mediated by GPI. Similarly, SN and GPB were also mediated by GPI. Promoting knowledge of the many factors influencing green purchase behavior, the study will assist policymakers and green marketers in formulating and putting into practice initiatives to stimulate green shopping.

Keywords: Subjective norms, Attitude towards green products, green purchase intentions, and green purchase behavior

Introduction

Human consumption patterns have changed due to the world's rapid population growth, which has had an impact on population welfare both directly and indirectly (Saidani et al., 2023). The ecosystem is vulnerable to a multitude of potential negative effects, such as population growth, global warming, and the extinction of species and biodiversity (Chen, 2010). There is a growing market for green products and services as a result of consumers' growing knowledge

of the environmental issues raised by their consumption. Consumption of "green" products is focused on recyclable items, those that have not undergone any kind of animal testing, are all-natural and organic, and are ecologically approachable (Sharma & Foropon, 2019).

The espousal of sustainable products consumes become a hot topic among academics due to the quick growth of sustainability concerns and environmental consciousness (Amin & Tarun, 2020). Numerous research has been undertaken to understand how consumers behave toward various kinds of green products under varied conditions (Manrai et al., 2017). This trend of increasing green product purchases is supported by several factors identified in academic research, including a favorable attitude toward green products (Ullah et al., 2022). However, it has not been discovered that customers' positive attitudes toward green products simply translate into actual green product purchases (Uddin & Khan, 2016). Despite consumer support for green products and environmental concerns, the market share of green products is only 1% to 3% of the total market (Mirani et al., 2020). Numerous studies on the factors influencing customers' decisions to make green purchases have been conducted over the past 30 years (Shin et al., 2023). Young people are the best people for understanding green purchase intention completely since they will be the decision-makers of the future and have an influence on their friends' and families' purchasing decisions. In this regard, the current study applied the theory of planned behavior to examine young educated consumers 'attitudes toward green products (AGP), green purchase intentions (GPI), and green purchase behaviors (GPB).

The major aim of this study is to determine the factors influencing customers' views of their intentions to make sustainable purchases and the implications that these perceptions have on their actual sustainable purchasing behavior. Moreover, to change an understanding of the Millennial Generation's consumption of sustainable products. The study's findings will assist marketers in developing methods to encourage millennials to buy organic food by reassuring green purchase behavior.

The following two research issues on contemporary sustainable consumption habits were definitely addressed by our study: What are the many factors that influence consumers' perceptions of green products and how they choose to purchase them? What role does customer intent play in balancing sentiments toward green items and green purchasing behavior? This study inspected the association amid young customers' behavior, intentions, and behavior regarding green purchasing criteria using the TPB's structure.

Conceptual Development

There are three factors that affect behavioral intention are attitude toward engaging in the conduct, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. (Ajzen, 1991). In particular, the idea has improved our capacity to foretell someone's desire to act in a socially responsible manner in a variety of contexts (Han & Stoel, 2017). Studies show that people who were more committed to eco-friendly habits, including recycling, were more inclined to look for information on environmental protection than other people (Vining & Ebreo, 1990). Flynn et al. (1996) claimed that those who seek opinions do so to determine products and make purchasing decisions by gathering information or opinions from unofficial sources. The study concludes that green purchasing practices are a crucial factor in promoting sustainable consumption.

To bridging the gap between consumer attitude and behavior and helping them translate their values and beliefs about sustainability into demands and purchasing behavior, it is therefore important from both a theoretical and practical perspective to enhance knowledge transition and provide a catalyst (Taisch et al., 2017).

Due to environmental and health concerns, consumers worldwide have demonstrated a more favorable attitude toward green products over the past two decades (De Barcellos et al., 2015). However, in most cases, customers' favorable attitudes. The gap between consumers' green attitudes and behaviors in industrialized countries has been studied by a number of academics. Since the 1960s, consumers in industrialized nations have been more environmentally aware than those in developing or impoverished nations (Chaudhary & Bisai, 2018). However, several academics have also attempted to investigate consumer attitudes and habits about green consumption (Sarkar et al., 2019).

Environmental degradation is typically correlated with human purchase attitudes, intents, and behaviors (Rahayu et al., 2019). The way one feels about a behavior indicates how highly or lowly one values that behavior's performance (Ajzen, 1991). Green purchasing behavior is defined as choosing items that may be recycled and benefit the environment (Khaskheli et al., 2022). The urge to strive to carry out a specific type of activity is referred to as intention. However, the pragmatic research that has been done so far on the link between green behavior and attitude has not been very conclusive (Taufique et al., 2022). According to several researchers, a favorable attitude toward green products (AGP) correlates with high levels of green purchase intentions (GPI), which is the underlying relationship between AGP and GPI (Chan & Lau, 2000). The Theory of Reasoned Action and the Theory of Planned Behavior, among others (Ajzen, 1991). Captivating into account the results of the previous lessons and concepts, the purpose of the current investigation was to confirm that GPI mediates the interaction between AGP and GPB. As a result, this study makes the following recommendations, which are consistent with the literature.

H1 AGP significantly influences GPI in a positive manner.

H2 GPI positively influences GPB.

H3 GPI mediates the link between AGP and GPB.

Subjective Norms (SN)

The hypothetical communal pressure to engage in a particular action or not is known as a subjective norm (Ajzen 1991). The effect of SN on buying intention has previously been the subject of numerous studies. Some of this research discovered a notable effect of SN on GPI (Liu, 2012). While a few researchers were unable to prove that SN had any impact on GPI (Connell 2010). The following hypotheses are made by this study in light of the findings of these studies:

H4 SN positively affects the GPI

H6 GPI mediates the link between SN and GPB

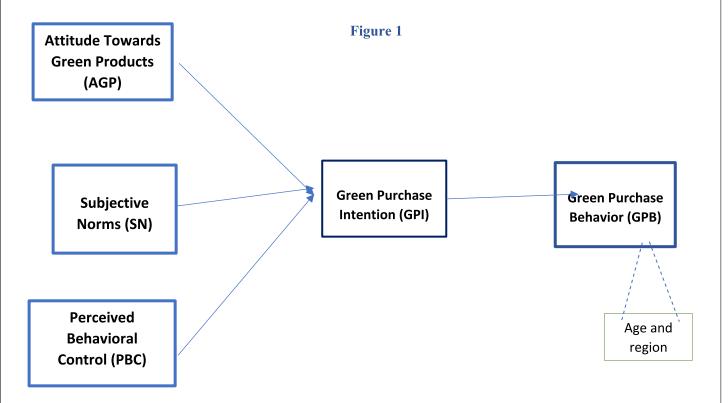
Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)

The term "perceived behavioral control" (PBC) describes the level of switch that a person believes they have over their behavior as well as their self-assurance in their ability to carry out

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the act (Ajzen, 1991). In a number of earlier studies, it was shown that perceived behavioral control and purchase intentions were positively correlated when looking at several research areas, including recycling and reusing (Taylor & Todd, 1995). However, it was noted that PBC has little impact on GPI. The determination of this study was to test the following hypothesis regarding the connection between PBC and GPI.

H5 PBC significantly affects the GPI in a positive manner. **H7** GPI mediates the link between PBC and GPB



Data and Methods

As a starting point, we developed a theoretical model, which is depicted in Figure 1, based on the literature and theories previously stated. AGP, SN, PBC, IGP, and GPB were among the five latent constructs (unobserved variables) that the suggested model identified. Instead of explicitly measuring these constructs, it may be possible to do so through indications or manifestations (observed variables). The arrows pointing in the direction of their corresponding indicators indicated that the latent constructs, which were independent of the measurements utilized in this model, were what caused the items.

Context

The study's objectives include a thorough research of how attitudes toward green items, arbitrary standards, and perceived behavioral control affect green purchasing behavior as well as how green purchase intention functions as a mediator of these effects.

The study by Gupta (2021), "Validating the theory of planned behavior in green purchasing behavior" (SN Business & Economics), has been carried out on many demographics, particularly millennials in Pakistan, in order to examine it for a larger perspective and beyond its limitations. Three independent variables—Attitude Towards Green Products, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control—one dependent variable—Green Purchase Behavior—and a mediator—Green Purchase Intention—are present in this study, which is based on the literature described above (see Figure 1). Region and age were once thought to be controlling factors that may affect consumers' online behavioral intentions.

The questionnaire has been circulated among 50 respondents for this reason in order to assess its validity for the purpose of the pilot test. After that, 206 respondents made up the remaining data. There are 3 independent factors and 1 dependent variable in this study, however there is also a mediator.

Research Instrument

For each of the variables, the research tool in Smart PLS4 has undergone many testings', including correlation, reliability, regression analysis, and descriptive statistics. Also, for mediation analysis, Hayes Process followed.

In this study, a quantitative analysis of earlier research was used as the research tool, which was a questionnaire. Paul (2016), adopted the following items for the variables: three items of the Perceived Behavioral Control; three items of the Subjective Norms; and three items of the Attitude Towards Green Products. Chan (2001) Green Purchase Intention (3 items) are the elements for the variable. GPB was measured using two items taken from Junior (2015)and one item adopted from Mishal (2017). Each measurement item was calculated using a five-point Likert scale, with labels 1 and 5 denoting "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree," respectively.

Measurement and Analysis

Respondents Profiling

Table 1: Gender and Age-Wise Distribution of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	106	45%
Female	150	58%
Age		
15-20 years old	20	7.8
21-24 years old	43	16.8
25-26years old	152	59.5
27-32years old	25	9.8
33-37years old	10	3.9
38-41 years old	6	2.4

Out of the total sample size, 45% of the questionnaires were filled by males and 58% by females. Most respondents were in age between 25-26 years old whose percentage is 59.3%,

whereas 7.8%, 16.8%, 9.8%, 3.9% and 2.4% were of age groups 15-20 years old, 21-24years, and 27-32 years old, 33-37years old and 38-41years old respectively (see Table 1: Gender and Age-Wise Distribution of Respondents).

Correlational and Reliability Analysis

Table 2: Reliability

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
AGP	.887	3
SN	.812	3
PBC	.788	3
GPI	.821	3
GPB	.766	3

All the variables' correlation coefficients that are significant at the .05 levels are shown in

Table 2: **Reliability**. The values show how each variable's constituent parts are internally consistent and reliable, and reliability and an acceptable value are higher than 0.7. The number of items for Attitude towards green purchase (AGP) was three (=0.887), the number of items for social norm (SN) was three (=0.812), the number of items for Perceived behavioural control was three (=0.788), the number of items for green purchase intention was three (=0.821), and the number of items for green purchase behaviour was three (=0.766). All variables' Cronbach alphas were confirmed to be reliable (15 items > 0.50)

Table 3: Correlations

Construct	AGP	SN	PBC	GPI	GPB
AGP	1	.856	.626	.667	.640
SN	04	1	.157	.103	076
PBC	.223	.157	1	.619	.520
GPI	.345	.103	.619	1	.521
GPB	.546	076	.520	.521	1

The correlation between all variables is displayed in the table above (see Table 3:Correlations). The term "correlation" describes how two variables having a +1 to -1 range relate to one another. A weak correlation exists when the correlation coefficient range of the correlation coefficient between the independent and dependent variables is between 0.01 and 0.39. Additionally, there is a weak association between coefficient values of 0.60 and 0.99, but a high correlation between 0.40 and 0.59.

According to the above table, there is a strong constructive link between attitude towards green purchase (AGP=0.667), Subjective norm (SN=0.103), Perceived behaviour control (PBC=619) and green purchase intention (GPI=0.521) has a strong and positive correlation.

Regression Analysis

H1 AGP significantly influences GPI in a positive manner.

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H4 SN positively affects the GPI

H5 PBC significantly affects the GPI in a positive manner.

Measurement Model

Table 4: Linear Regression-Model Summary and Anova

Construct	\mathbb{R}^2	F
GPI	.621	137.555

Dependent Variable: GPI

Table 5: Linear Regression - Coefficient

	Model	odel Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		В	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.429	.160		2.679	.008
	AGP	.094	.069	.102	1.363	.174
	SN	.380	.082	.401	4.652	.000
	PBC	.376	.061	.354	6.183	.000

Dependent Variable: GPI

The percentage of variation in the independent variable (X) that is explained by the dependent variable (Y) in a model is known as covariance, also known as coefficient of determination, or R square. AGP is the X variable, while the Y variable is the intention to make green purchases. Therefore, GPI is the cause of 62% of the change in AGP. Use the F-test or F-value to assess whether a regression analysis is significant or not. As a result, the F-statistics value, which is 137.555, specifies that the regression model is statistically substantial. The beta is 0.094, implying that only 69% of the GPI's fluctuation was explained by AGP. AGP's t-statistics value of 1.363, however, confirms the relationship's lack of significance with respect to GPI at p 0.05.

Whereas, the beta is .380, which assumes that only 82% variation in the GPI was clarified by SN. Except that, the value of t-statistics placed at 4.652 of SN which validates the significant relationship with GPI at less than 0.05 (p<0.05).

The beta is 0.376, which assumes that only 61% variation in the GPI was clarified by PBC. Except that, the value of t-statistics placed at 6.183 of PBC which also validates the significant relationship with PBC at less than 0.05 (p<0.05).

Hence, H₁, H₄ and H₅ is recognized that AGP, SN and PBC has a **positive relationship** through GPI (see Table 5: Linear Regression - Coefficient)

H2 GPI positively influences GPB.

Table 6: Linear Regression-Model Summary and Anova

Construct	\mathbb{R}^2	F
GPB	.618	410.272

Dependent Variable: GPB

Table 7: Linear Regression - Coefficient

Model			dardized icients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		В	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.794	.138		5.744	.000
	GPI	.773	.038	.786	20.255	.000

Dependent Variable: GPB

GPB is the cause of 61.8% of the change in GPI. Use the F-test or F-value to assess whether a regression analysis is significant or not. As a result, the F-statistics value, which is 410.272, designates that the regression model is statistically significant. The beta is 0.773, implying that only 38% of the GPI's fluctuation was explained by GPI. GPI's t-statistics value of 20.255, however, confirms the relationship's significance with respect to GPB at p 0.05 (see

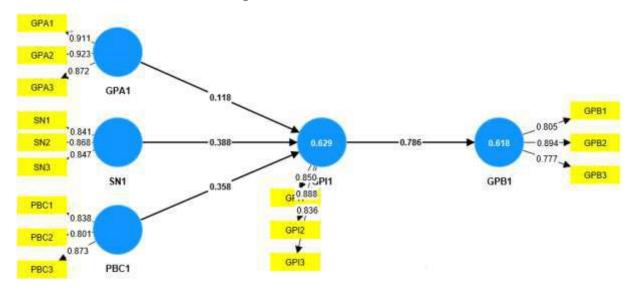
Table 7: Linear Regression - Coefficient). Hence, H₂, is recognized that GPI has a positive relationship through GPB.

Structural Model

Table 8: Total Effects

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
H1: AGP -> GPI	0.118	0.122	0.076	1.559	0.119
H2: SN -> GPI	0.388	0.385	0.098	3.942	0.00
H3: PBC -> GPI	0.358	0.357	0.068	5.306	0.00
H4: GPI -> GPB	0.093	0.096	0.060	1.554	0.120

Figure 2: Structural Model



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Above Table 8: Total Effects shows relationship between independent and dependent variable by the help of structural model. As per the analysis, there is a significant relationship of AGP, SN and PBC with GPI. Also, results revealed that, there is an insignificant link between GPI and GPB as value of p > 0.05.

Mediation Analysis

H3 GPI mediates the link between AGP and GPB.

Table 9: Direct and indirect effects

Direct and indirect effects	Effect	SE	t	р	LLCI	UUCI
Direct effect of X on Y	.1945	.0472	4.1188	.0001	.1015	.2876
Indirect effect of X on Y	.4036	.0445			.3145	.4893

The examination in the study of the mediating role of MV in the relationship amid IV and DV was done using mediation. The results revealed that the indirect effect of the X-variable (AGP) on the Y-variable (GPB) is significant as the value of p is < 0, whereas the direct effect of the X variable on the Y variable is significant. This analysis shows that there is complete or total mediation, which means that the impact of attitude towards green purchase on green purchase behavior is completely transmitted through green purchase intention (see Table 9: Direct and indirect effects).

H6 GPI mediates the link between SN and GPB

Table 10: Direct and indirect effects

Direct and indirect effects	Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI	UUCI
Direct effect of X on Y	.2448	.0544	4.5021	.0000	.1377	.3518
Indirect effect of X on Y	.4296	.0499			.3282	.5242

The findings showed that the direct effect of the X variable on the Y variable is significant but the indirect effect of the X variable on the Y variable is not significant since the value of p is less than 0. This analysis shows that there is complete or total mediation, which means that the impact of subjective norms on green purchase behavior is completely transmitted through green purchase intention (see Table 10: Direct and indirect effects)

H7 GPI mediates the link between PBC and GPB

Table 11: Direct and indirect effects

Direct and indirect effects	Effect	SE	t	р	LLCI	UUCI
Direct effect of X on Y	.0903	.0595	1.5161	.1307	0270	.2075
Indirect effect of X on Y	.5586	.0525			.4546	.6584

The results revealed that the indirect effect of the X-variable (PBC) on the Y-variable (GPB) is insignificant as the value of p is > 0, whereas the direct effect of the X variable on the Y variable is also insignificant. This analysis shows that there is no complete or total mediation, which means that the impact of perceived behavior control on green purchase behavior is completely transmitted through green purchase intention (see Table 11: Direct and indirect effects).

Discussion and Implications

The research evaluated the impact of SN and PBC on GPI during this procedure. The effect of GPI on GPB was then investigated. Finally, it was determined how much GPI mediated the link between AGP, SN, PBC and GPB. The estimated correlations were supported by all of the analysis' findings. The study's PLS approach unequivocally demonstrated that AGP had a favorable and significant influence on GPI. In other words, when customers' attitudes about green products become more positive, consumers' inclinations to buy green items also increase. Previous studies have confirmed that consumers with favorable attitudes toward green products have higher intentions to purchase green products, including Jaiswal, Chen and Deng (2016); Lodorfos and Dennis (2008); Suki (2016); Tarkiainen (2005); Yadav and Pathak (2016). Additionally, this empirical study, along with several other ones, confirmed that SN had a sizable and favorable impact on GPI. This study subsequently revealed that PBC significantly improved GPI. In this regard, some previous research on green consumer behavior Additionally, Vermeir, Verbeke et al. (2006) shown that customers' perceived capacity (time, money, etc.) to direct and carry out the action affects the purchase intentions. In the currently available literature on green consumer psychology, scholars like Gupta (2021) have also confirmed the mediation role of GPI between AGP and GPB. The outcomes of the mediation are also in line with those of earlier research studies (Baumgartner et al., 1989). Additionally, by establishing the applied arbitrating role of GPI in the link between SN and GPB and finding no role for GPI in mediating GPB due to Pakistan's market, this research has made major contributions to the existing understanding of green purchasing behavior.

According to Gupta (2021), who emphasized the importance of various green purchase intention, this study contends that using GPI as a mediator between AGP, SN, PBC and GPB in case of organic food. In future, researchers can work on other elements like sustainable consumption behavior, to study the consequence of green purchase intention on green purchase behavior of millennials towards organic food consumption.

These findings have significant practical implications for professionals, especially those concerned with addressing the potential positive effects of green purchase behavior. As a result, it offers crucial inputs to businesses and marketers in order to close the gap between customers' positive attitudes regarding green products and their actual purchases of green goods.

Limitations of the Study and Future Research

Although research has brought fresh perspective to our understanding of green consumer behavior, it has several limitations that may be explored further in the future. The survey was limited to the educated millennials living in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, two twin towns in Pakistan. Future studies can therefore use the sample of less educated and general adolescents from various places to examine the green psychology. Additionally, the survey was done to examine how millennial customers feel and act toward various green or eco-friendly products,

such as online education, health, apparel, stationery, etc. Future researchers can therefore examine consumers' attitudes and behaviors toward a particular category of green products.

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