

## Green Appeal: Exploring Perceptual Factors Driving Green Product Purchase

### Intentions

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### Abstract

*Purpose:* Heightened awareness of sustainable consumption aimed at environmental protection has led consumers to favor green products over conventional ones. This research seeks to examine how perceptual factors—such as perceived environmental knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness, perceived behavioral control, and perceived environmental concern—affect consumers' attitudes toward green product purchase intention. *Methodology:* 356 responses were analysed using SmartPLS 4 software. *Findings:* Perceived environmental knowledge was found to exert the strongest influence on consumers' attitudes toward green product purchase intentions, followed by other perceptive factors.

**Keywords-** Perceptive factors, Green Product Purchase Intentions, India.

## Introduction

Environmentalism is a big concern in India and going green is proposed as a strategy to address the ecological disaster. Individuals are increasingly appreciating the importance of reducing their environmental impact. Consumers are joining the movement for sustainable development by embracing green consumption. Green consumption, or using eco-friendly items, is gaining popularity as it helps conserve the natural environment and promotes sustainability (Kang, Liu, and Kim 2013). According to the National Geographic Society (Greendex survey 2012), Indian consumers have shown a strong desire for green products, with the highest score since 2008 and ranking first among 17 nations. Greendex survey, (2012) found that consumers in developing nations are highly environment conscious.

The young population is more environmentally concerned than the overall population, and has greater preferences, is highly inclined towards environment friendly product consumption (Prakash and Pathak 2017). Young consumers are extremely emotional or sensitive to the degree of investment required to protect the situation. Eco-friendliness and environmental concerns have received significant attention recently. Green product consumption may be encouraged to achieve sustainable consumption. Green products are made with non-toxic, natural, recycled materials and eco-friendly packaging (Nekmahmud et al. 2022). This research provides a comprehensive framework of various factors impacting purchasing intentions towards green products.

In green purchasing intention domain, an analysis of customer-perceived behavior control (Paul, Modi, and Patel 2016), perceived consumer effectiveness (Rehman et al. 2022), perceived environmental concern (Prakash and Pathak 2017), and perceived environmental knowledge (Yadav and Pathak 2017) along with attitude (Nekmahmud et al.

2022) collectively will enhance the understanding of the purchasing intention of consumers. This study proposes an integrated model that examines how perceived behavior control (PBC), perceived consumer effectiveness (PCE), perceived environmental concern (PEC), and perceived environment knowledge (PEK) affect green product purchase intentions (GPPI). This research advances understanding of the perceptive factors influencing green purchasing intention among consumers in a developing country. This will help marketers plan, strategize, and appropriately focus their green marketing efforts.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1 Perceived environment knowledge**

“Environmental knowledge is the information possessed by individuals about the environment, and the impact of human actions on the environment” (Kang et al. 2013). Those who possess environmental knowledge are likely to have favorable attitude towards green products and desirable consumption behaviors (Kang et al. 2013; Mostafa 2007). In the context of sustainability, the assessment of perceived environmental knowledge has been identified as a crucial prerequisite for forming purchase intentions (Yadav and Pathak 2017). In conclusion, according to the literature, environmental awareness is a crucial element affecting attitudes toward purchasing green items. Nevertheless, there is variability in the association between environmental awareness and the purchase intention. Furthermore, there are little research on such interactions, notably in India. For example, a research found no significant association between environmental awareness and the desire to buy green items in India (Jaiswal and Kant 2018). The authors tried bridging the gap in the literature, by analysing the relationship.

## 2.2 Perceived Consumer Effectiveness

“Perceived consumer effectiveness, or PCE, refers to a person's conviction or assessment of their ability to meaningfully contribute to environmental conservation through their activities” (Kang et al. 2013). Moreover, PCE measurement is defined as the person's evaluation of themselves about environmental issues. Several academics have observed that perceived consumer effectiveness is highly influential than various cognitive characteristics, such as attitude, knowledge, concern and so on, in predicting ecologically sustainable behaviour (Rehman et al. 2022; Tan 2011). The more customers think their activities contribute to environmental conservation; they support pro-environment consumption more. In essence, customers with a greater level of consumer effectiveness tend to have good opinions towards green products (Rambabu Lavuri 2022), leading to their purchasing behavior (Kang et al. 2013; Tan 2011). In contrast, the notion of PCE has received minimum attention in the Indian context. Therefore, this study will investigate the impact of PCE on attitude toward GPPI.

## 2.3 Perceived behavioral control

“Perceived behavioral control is the degree to which people believe they have personal control over the intention to carry out a particular behavior” (Maichum, Parichatnon, and Peng 2016). People who believe they have better hold on the behavior are likely to have stronger intentions to carry out that specific activity (Ajzen 1991). Additionally, perceived behavioral control can be delineated into two components: “perceived self-efficacy, reflecting an individual's perception towards the ease or difficulty of executing a behavior, and perceived controllability, indicating the extent to which people believe they have control over the behavior” (Ajzen 1991). It is an important element having a large direct impact on eco-friendly commodities consumption (Paul et al. 2016). Perhaps,

numerous researchers agree that perceived affordance and confidence are positively related to attitude towards green product purchase intention (Nekmahmud et al. 2022).

#### **2.4 Perceived environmental concern**

"The degree of awareness that individuals possess regarding environmental issues, along with a supportive inclination to address them, and a personal willingness to actively contribute to their resolution" is defined as perceived environmental concern by Park and Lin (2020). The purchase intention of pro-environment products is significantly influenced by environmental concerns (Farzin et al. 2023). A substantial body of evidence strongly supports the influence of environmental concern on consumers' attitude towards green product (Farzin et al. 2023; Paul et al. 2016) and the green product consumption among Indian consumers (Prakash and Pathak 2017). Past studies suggest that environmentally aware consumers have prioritized eco-friendly products or services over traditional alternatives (Park and Lin 2020). Furthermore, when it comes to purchasing intentions about green items, the effects of environmental concern revealed a beneficial influence. As a result, a rise in environmental consciousness among customers is probably going to encourage environmental preservation and enhance the number of green products that are consumed.

Therefore, the study proposes:

H1: Perceived environment knowledge has a significant influence on attitude.

H2: Perceived consumer effectiveness has a significant influence on attitude.

H3: Perceived behavioral control has a significant influence on attitude.

H4: Perceived environmental concern has a significant influence on attitude.

### 2.3 Attitude and Green Product Purchase Intention

“Attitude (AT) is an individual's favorable or unfavorable judgment of buying behavior toward things”(Ajzen 1991). Previous research (Kamalanon, Chen, and Le 2022; Nekmahmud et al. 2022), have repeatedly demonstrated positive association between attitude and Purchase Intentions. Sreen et al. (2018) discovered in Indian context that attitudes had the greatest influence on GPPI similar to Paul et al. (2016). There is a need to encourage favorable attitudes toward green products to increase customer interest and contribute to the nation's long-term sustainability(Nekmahmud et al. 2022).

Therefore, we propose,

H5: Attitude has a significant influence on attitude.

#### 2.3.1 Mediating role of attitude

Paul et al.(2016) argue that attitude acts as a significant mediator in environmental concern and purchasing intention relationship towards green products. Paul et al (2016) confirms that environmentally concerned Indian consumers along with having a favorable attitude toward green products are more inclined towards ecologically friendly purchases. This shows that these consumers are motivated to make positive changes to their purchasing patterns because of their awareness of the critical condition of nature. Similarly, Rambabu Lavuri (2022) argue that in the context of organic items, attitude serves as a significant mediator in the relationship between perceived consumer effectiveness and purchase intention, implying that consumers with positive attitudes toward eco-friendly items prefer green products over traditional products with the belief that they can conserve the environment through their activities.

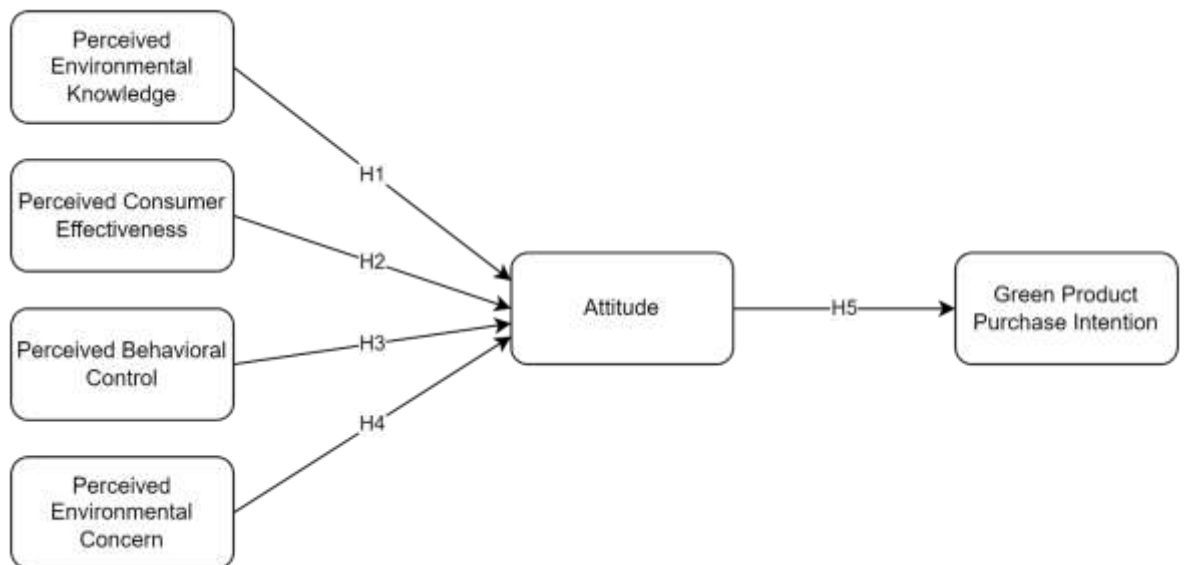
H5a : Attitude significantly mediates the Perceived environment knowledge and green product purchase intention.

H5b: Attitude significantly mediates the Perceived consumer effectiveness and green product purchase intention.

H5c: Attitude significantly mediates the Perceived behavioral control and green product purchase intention.

H5d: Attitude significantly mediates the Perceived environmental concern and green product purchase intention.

The proposed model based on hypothesis is illustrated below .



*Figure 1 Research model*

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1 Sample

The focus of the study is on young customers, as Indian youngsters are more aware of environmental issues than other demographic groups (Prakash, Singh, and Yadav 2018). Furthermore, this younger age is not only more aware of their immediate purchase decisions but also understands that their current activities can influence the future environment (Yadav and Pathak 2016). Researchers reached respondents who lived in numerous large cities in the northern and central regions of India. About 20%- 25% of India's population lives in this region. Since young people are assumed to be more conscious of environmental issues, the study used snowball sampling, which excluded people under 17 and over 37 years old, as well as those who were unaware of green products. F. Hair Jr et al. (2014) recommended 10-15 observations for each evaluated variable, hence the sample size for the study was established accordingly. With 20 questions over 6 constructs, the sample size was determined to be 300 responses ( $= 20 \text{ items} \times 15$ ). The online survey received a total of 380 responses. After removing the responses with little to no variation, researchers got a final sample of 356 valid responses. Table 1 depicts the demographics profile.

**Table 1.** Demographics

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	165	46.3
	Female	186	52.2
	Third gender	5	1.49
Age	18-24	134	37.6
	24-30	127	35.6
	30-36	95	26.6
Education	Higher secondary level	96	26.9
	Bachelor's degree	102	28.6
	Master's degree	101	28.3
	others	57	16
<b>Total respondents</b>		<b>356</b>	<b>100</b>

### 3.2 Measures

Researchers have used a structured questionnaire to collect responses. The statements of the questionnaire were adopted various authors' work. The measurement scale includes six constructs and 20 items in total. The notion of perceived consumer effectiveness was tested using 3 items (Choi and Kim 2005). Furthermore, perceived environmental concern was measured based on 5 measures (Kilbourne and Pickett 2008). Perceived behavioral control with 3 items (Sun and Wang 2019) and perceived environmental knowledge (Mostafa 2007) with 3 items were also adopted. Lastly, the attitude was measured based on 3 items and green product purchase intention with 3 items (Sun and Wang 2019).

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Measurement model

Utilizing PLS is advantageous when assessing intricate models with limited datasets, as it is less stringent than alternative models when it comes to sample size, data distribution, and model complexity. In the process of analyzing the data, the SmartPLS 4.0 software was employed. This software initially assesses the reliability and validity of the scale followed by path analysis to establish the association between the variables.

The analysis initially involved examining factor loadings, evaluating internal consistency reliability, and assessing convergent and discriminant validity. All items exhibited factor loadings exceeding 0.7 (as indicated in Table 2), affirming the validity. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was further assessed to confirm the reliability of the constructs, and in all instances, the obtained values exceeded 0.7. This signifies robust internal consistency within the scale. The AVE should surpass 0.5 and CR should exceed 0.7 value in order to confirm

convergence validity (F. Hair Jr et al. 2014). Table 2 confirms the reliability and validity of constructs on criteria.

The variance inflation factor values for component vary between 1.470 and 3.981, much lower than the standard value of 5 (Hair et al. 2019), indicating no multicollinearity issue, and there is no adverse impact between the items or predictors. Consequently, every construct is statistically distinct, demonstrating satisfactory discriminant validity.

The extent to which constructs maintain their self-identity and remain distinct from other constructs in the study is assessed using discriminant validity. The HTMT criterion is utilized to demonstrate discriminant validity (Table 3) falling below the standard value of 0.85, indicating the latent variable's high level of discriminant validity (Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt 2015). And, also as per Fornell Larcker's criteria all the diagonal values must be higher than the non-diagonal values. Table 3 proves significant level of discriminant validity based on both aforementioned criteria.

**Table 2.** Scale Reliability

Construct	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's $\alpha$	rho_a	CR	AVE	VIF
Perceived Behavioral Control	PBC1	0.829	0.840	0.858	0.903	0.757	1.809
	PBC2	0.866					2.014
	PBC3	0.913					2.350
Perceived Consumer Effectiveness	PCE1	0.804	0.794	0.815	0.879	0.708	2.155
	PCE2	0.800					1.470
	PCE3	0.915					2.679
Perceived Environmental Concern	PEC1	0.831	0.916	0.927	0.937	0.747	2.327
	PEC2	0.839					2.366
	PEC3	0.864					3.785
	PEC4	0.874					3.981
	PEC5	0.912					3.526
Perceived Environmental Knowledge	PEK 1	0.861	0.761	0.758	0.861	0.676	3.655
	PEK2	0.858					3.690
	PEK3	0.741					1.150

Construct	Items	Loadings	Cronabcah's $\alpha$	Rho-A	CR	AVE	VIF
Attitude	ATT1	0.853	0.812	0.816	0.889	0.727	1.851
	ATT2	0.819					1.618
	ATT3	0.885					2.038
Green Product Purchase Intention	GPPI1	0.904	0.856	0.892	0.912	0.776	2.557
	GPPI2	0.925					2.657
	GPPI3	0.809					1.761

Table 3. Discriminant validity, HTMT criterion

HTMT Criterion						
	ATT	GPPI	PBC	PCE	PEC	PEK
ATT						
GPPI	0.649					
PBC	0.58	0.786				
PCE	0.657	0.867	0.726			
PEC	0.423	0.388	0.309	0.432		
PEK	0.67	0.722	0.739	0.654	0.339	
FLC Criterion						
	ATT	GPPI	PBC	PCE	PEC	PEK
ATT	0.853					
GPPI	0.552	0.881				
PBC	0.486	0.661	0.87			
PCE	0.539	0.727	0.61	0.841		
PEC	0.371	0.354	0.272	0.376	0.864	
PEK	0.544	0.603	0.613	0.56	0.301	0.822

## 4.2 Structural model evaluation

For structural model assessment, a 5000-subsample bootstrapping method was utilized (Figure 2). In the subsequent section, Table 4 represents path relationships results.

The calculation of  $R^2$  is undertaken to assess sample consistency. The  $R^2$  value of GPPI is 0.304 exceeding the threshold value of 10% (Falk and Miller 1992) depicting that 30% of the variation in the GPPI levels is due to the exogenous variables. Further to check the predictive performance of the PLS path, a blindfolding approach is employed to calculate the  $Q^2$  value.  $Q^2$  values that exceed the threshold of zero hold significance (Shmueli et al. 2019). GPPI exhibits a  $Q^2$  value of 0.407, indicating relevant predictive performance.

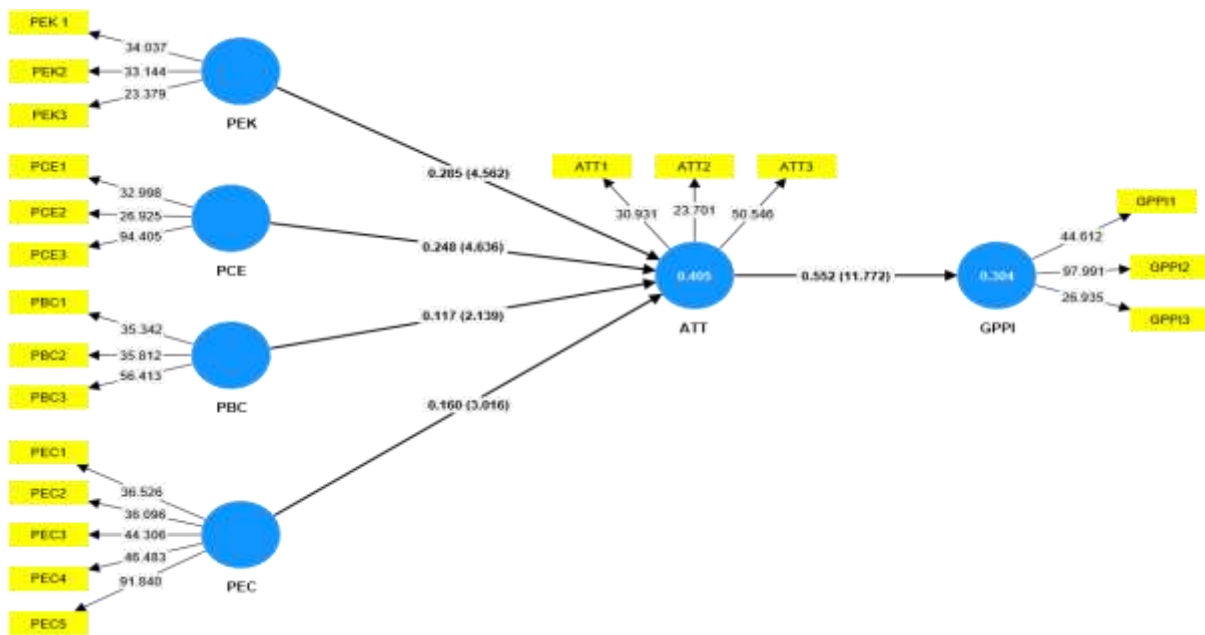


Figure 2: Structural Model Results

Considering the t-statistics, five direct hypotheses were affirmed, indicating a significant impact. “The path coefficient is considered significant when its value is non-zero and the confidence interval does not include zero” (F. Hair Jr et al. 2014). Table 4 represents the path coefficients and t values. It appears that PEK, PCE, PBC, and PEC exhibit a significant positive relationship with ATT, and ATT further depicts a positive relationship with GPPI. as indicated by the t-values (PEK=4.562, PCE=4.636, PBC=2.139, PEC=3.016 & ATT=11.772). Based on the path coefficient PEK (0.285) has the highest positive impact on ATT followed by PCE (0.248). PEC (0.160) and PBC (0.117). Also, ATT has a

significant impact on GPPI with a  $\beta$  value of 0.552. Resulting in the acceptance of H1, H2, H3, H4 & H5.

Table 4. The structural model assessment

HN	Hypothesized path	Std $\beta$	M	STDEV	T statistics	P values	Result
H1	PEK -> ATT	0.285	0.287	0.063	4.562	0.000	Supported
H2	PCE -> ATT	0.248	0.248	0.053	4.636	0.000	Supported
H3	PBC -> ATT	0.117	0.115	0.055	2.139	0.032	Supported
H4	PEC -> ATT	0.16	0.164	0.053	3.016	0.003	Supported
H5	ATT -> GPPI	0.552	0.552	0.047	11.772	0.000	Supported
			<b>R-square</b>	<b>R-square adjusted</b>	<b>Q<sup>2</sup>predict</b>		
		ATT	0.405	0.398	0.384		
		GPPI	0.304	0.302	0.407		

### 4.3 Mediation effect

For mediation analysis, PLS-SEM bootstrap resampling method was used. As per the analysis, all the indirect hypotheses H5A, H5b, H5c & H5d are supported on the basis t-value and p-value. The results of Table 5 affirm that the attitude of consumers does have a mediating impact on PEK ( $\beta=0.157$ ,  $t=4.148$  and  $p<0.05$ ), PCE ( $\beta=0.137$ ,  $t=3.747$  and  $p<0.05$ ), PBC ( $\beta=0.064$ ,  $t=2.050$  and  $p<0.05$ ), PEC ( $\beta=0.088$ ,  $t=3.201$  and  $p<0.05$ ), and GPPI of the consumers.

Table 5. Mediation analysis

HN	Hypothesized path	Std $\beta$	M	STDEV	T statistics	P values	Result
H5a	PEK -> ATT -> GPPI	0.157	0.159	0.038	4.148	0.00	Supported
H5b	PCE -> ATT -> GPPI	0.137	0.138	0.037	3.747	0.00	Supported
H5c	PBC -> ATT -> GPPI	0.064	0.064	0.031	2.05	0.04	Supported
H5d	PEC -> ATT -> GPPI	0.088	0.09	0.028	3.201	0.001	Supported

## 5. Discussions and implications

We examined the function of perceptive factors in framing attitude towards green product purchase intention of young consumers in India. Our model proposed four major perceived factors impacting attitude and subsequently green product purchase intention and all of them, including perceived environmental knowledge (H1), perceived consumer effectiveness (H2), perceived behavioral control (H3), perceived environmental concern (H4) significantly led to consumers attitude and further attitude (H5) leading to the purchase intention. Further, the mediating impact of attitude (5a-5d) were also examined.

In the Indian context, perceived environmental knowledge was observed to significantly impact consumers' attitudes towards purchase intention of green products, aligning with previous research findings. Consumers are inclined to shift to green products when they possess expertise in green products and are cognizant of their benefits. The results suggest adequate environmental knowledge, especially among young adults and educated customers. Green consumerism is still nascent in India. To foster green consumerism and enhance environmental consciousness, initiatives such as "environmental education" can leverage ecologically themed symbols and claims. By educating consumers and encouraging them to make informed choices, these programs can promote the adoption of green products (Mostafa 2007). Integrated environmental communication may encourage

green consumption among youth and educated people, hence addressing a critical demographic for green marketing by policymakers and marketers. Perceived environmental knowledge is the strongest predictor of consumer attitude towards green product.

Perceived consumer effectiveness also exert a positive influence on consumers' attitude towards green product purchase intention verifying the research focusing on consumer effectiveness toward green product consumption (Jaiswal and Kant 2018). With higher PCE, consumers believe that they could address environmental challenges through their efforts (Rambabu Lavuri 2022). Therefore, In the Indian context, consumers hold a positive belief that their individual efforts will surely impact the environment positively, leading to a favorable attitude towards green consumption. For green consumption promotion, marketers can emphasize the use of eco-friendly carry bags, environmentally safe items, and avoidance of plastic bags through environmental marketing. A marketing campaign aimed at creating demand for green products could benefit both marketers and policymakers. In India, most of the population is young and educated, with a preference for self-directed action. As a result, they are more self-controlled and likely to prioritize environmental sustainability in their purchasing decisions. Consumers who see a favorable impact on the environment are more inclined towards adoption of environmentally friendly behaviors. Policymakers and green marketers should prioritize measuring consumer efficacy through integrated communication platforms that promote reduced waste generation.

Perceived behavioral control exerts a significant influence on attitude towards green product purchase intention, aligning with past studies (Nekmahmud et al. 2022). To lessen perceived complexity, green marketers should communicate the availability, manner of acquisition, and variety of green products, emphasizing their logistical efficiency. Marketers in India must aim to strengthen their controllability by expanding R&D efforts to offer more

green options, converting potential consumers into actual consumers due to limited green choices and consumers. To enhance the PBC, corporations should create infomercial advertising that highlights the benefits of green products and encourages first trial behavior.

Also, Perceived environmental concern is a significant factor driving demand for green products, consistent with earlier research on green consumerism (Paul et al. 2016). Thus, the findings suggest that today's young adults and educated generations are committed to environmental conservation and they feel a sense of responsibility toward environment conservation by consuming green products over traditional products. PEC was found to be the strongest perceptive factor. Targeting environmentally conscious Indian consumers is key to selling green products since they have a positive outlook towards green product consumption and are more considerate in taking preventive measures to reduce environmental degradation consumption behavior.

Results demonstrate a positive association between attitude and consumers' Green Product Purchase Intention (GPPI). This conclusion is similar to those by Nekmahmud et al. (2022) and Kamalanon, Chen, and Le (2022). A positive outlook toward environment friendly consumption can lead to a strong desire for green items in a variety of ways. First, a positive attitude shows positive views and judgments of green products, which influence people to see them as desirable and useful. Second, people who have good views about green products are more likely to believe they can make sustainable choices, which boosts their confidence and perceived control over their buying decisions. Third, a positive attitude can elicit favorable feelings and connections with green products, strengthening the decision to choose them over conventional alternatives.

Attitude also significantly mediates the relationship between PEK and GPPI (H5a), PCE and GPPI (H5b), PBC and GPPI (H5c), PEC and GPPI (H5d) implying all the

perceptive factors have a significant impact on purchase intention when consumers attitude towards green product consumption is positive than when it is on the negative side.

The research suggests that sustainable consumption is still in its early stages in India, with lower awareness and availability of green lifestyles and products. Environmental advertising of green products, including symbols, logos, and claims, is a more effective way to promote eco-friendly lifestyles and products in rising countries like India (Yadav and Pathak 2017). Online advertisements can increase awareness of green consumption benefits and promote a green lifestyle in the digital age. To better segment and target the market, companies should understand consumers' green purchasing behavior from a strategic marketing viewpoint. To promote green consumerism, consumers must integrate sustainable activities into their daily lives and have a strong desire to buy green items. Consumer campaigns can encourage corporations to adopt sustainable business practices, ultimately leading to sustainability goals. Consumers with strong PEK, PCE, PBC, and PEC are more inclined towards green consumerism. Increased behavioral control, concern, and self-efficacy towards green lifestyles can enhance green product purchase intention and promote sustainable consumption among the general population.

## **6. Limitations**

The sample is confined to the northern part of India, hence further research is needed to evaluate the model's generalizability across the country. Researchers could expand the model to include additional aspects. Also, Future work can focus on specific product categories, as this research explored green products in general.

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