The Impact of Green Awareness on Green Purchase Intentions with Mediating Effect of Green Trust: A Consumer Perspective

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Abstract
This research study examines the impact of Green Awareness (GA) on Green Purchase Intentions (GPI). We also investigated the mediating influence of Green Trust in the twin cities (Islamabad/Rawalpindi) of Pakistan. A total of 79 respondents participated in this research. The findings suggest that GA has a positive effect on GPI. The findings also suggest a positive effect of mediating variable GT on GPI. Individuals with high GT tend to have more GPI. The contemporary research also discusses the theoretical and practical implications of these findings.
Keywords: Green Awareness, Green Trust, Green Purchase Intention

1. Introduction

Lately environmental degradation has increased water and air pollution while also endangering human life (Zaidi, Yifei, Bhutto, Ali, and Alam, 2019). Subsequently, (Bei, 1995) detailed that protective sentiments have been affecting modern end users' customers towards the environment, which leads them to worry about their maintainable future life (Zaidi et al., 2019).

Natural disasters and calamities rising from the environmental greenhouse effects generated by rapid industrialization around the world has been keenly observed by general masses which has created quite a commotion (Chen, 2011; Gil and Jacob, 2018). Therefore, it is essential that people as well as organizations should focus on becoming more environmentally aware as nowadays there is an increasing trend of incorporating environmentally friendly products into the marketplace (Gil and Jacob, 2018). Organizations these days are continuously looking for alternate strategies to achieve differentiation in terms of products and services in today's environmental era (Chen and Chang, 2013; Ali et al., 2022). If these organizations tend to enhance their performance and effectively communicate their efforts, it will portray to the consumers that these companies are engaging in positive environmental inventiveness (Horiuchi and Schuchard, 2009; Audi and Ali, 2023).

Thus, many organizations have directed towards environmental conservation (Dwyer, 2009; Lee, 2009; Peattie, 1995; Gil and Jacob, 2018) which has led them to realize the significance of 'green revolution', an outcome of the 'go green' approach that is prevailing in today's modern era (Dwyer, 2009; Molina-Azorín et al., 2009; Gil and Jacob, 2018).

During previous decades, a change in customer's behavior towards environmental concerns has been observed. It favors an alteration of their buying choices through the consumption of environmental friendly substitutes available. However, customers in masses have started searching for green consuming products, these "end users' products either tangible or intangible that lessen their environmental impact either direct or indirect during their entire life cycle, in relation to the present technological and scientific eminence", thus, are ready for paying more for them (Sdrolia and Zarotiadis, 2019; Mezger, Cabanelas, Cabiddu, and Rüdiger, 2020; Shair et al., 2022).

The last few decades have significantly lead researchers to focus on environmental/green marketing which is a crucial factor that contributes to the marketing/management literature (Carrigan, and Piha, 2019). An efficient tactic to achieve this differentiation is green marketing. Nowadays organizations tend to make use of the green trend in order to benefit from those social and environmentally pledged products and services. Hence more companies all over the globe are now paying more consideration towards the concept of sustainable environment (Chang, 2011; Shair et al., 2023). Therefore, green marketing is considered a distinctive component of advertising. The term green asserts to be true, accurate, and clear. Nonetheless, many environmental assertions directing towards green aspects are vague and deceiving. These days' strong environmental signals by the consumers via their purchase behaviors have been observed. The purchasers' willingness to depend upon their expectations about an organizations future behavior is what defines trust (Morgan and Hunt 1994; Shair & Anwar, 2023). On the basis of the consumer's assessment and experience about a product or brand related information, trust is established (Moorman et al. 1993). With respect to international environmental laws and regulations as well as the customer environmentalism, green trust is considered to be of great significance for today's organizations (Chen & Chang, 2013). Furthermore, Green trust proposition is classified as the inclination to rely on a product pertaining to either tangibility or intangibility based on the element of trust resulting from its reliability, compassion, and capacity pertaining to ecological performance (Chen, 2010). Thus, the imperative force of green purchase forces companies into adapting to new marketing strategies (Chen and Chang, 2013). Lately, environmental realization among general public at large and definitely the politics of ecological problems have upstretched the environmental apprehension among Pakistani business firms, leading to establishment of what has known to be as "Green Differential Advantage".

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These days, customers have started opting for products that do not cause harm to the environment, and they evaluate the product in such a way that can be used for a longer period (Chen, 2010). With the increasing concern of environment, customer care is also improving (Grimmer & Bingham, 2013). The damage that is caused to the ozone layer by different types of pollution is being greatly understood and hence now consumer's behavior is more inclined to use the products that do not cause harm to the environment. This realization is termed as awareness towards green (Mourad et al., 2012). Green awareness influences the perception of customers towards green products ultimately resulting in consumption of eco-friendly products, this pattern of behavior is known as green consumerism (Bouten & Hoozée, 2013). Green awareness is when a customer shows caring behavior towards the environment and this may be influenced by some factors like knowledge of environment (Hariyanto & Alamsyah, 2019) and product attribute through eco-label (Rizwan, Mahmood, et al., 2014). Green awareness should be improved by the level of green knowledge finally resulting in positive behaviours towards green purchase (Suki et al., 2016). The products are labeled that indicates production process does not use chemical substances that can be harmful to the environment; this is referred to as Eco-label (Atănăsoaie, 2013). Customers tend to be compassionate when it comes to selecting a product, and they are also likely to look for product price, quality and product's packaging. Similarly, another attribute that's on the rise is eco-label and this dictates increasing customer care (Rashid, 2009). So, this shows that eco-label to a product influences green awareness is customer behavior. This results in customers considering valuing such products (Atănăsoaie, 2013). Same goes for product's price and the quality as customers consider many factors during product selection. Ultimately, when it comes to customer's choice the product is assumed to be highly valuable. The value of the product is related to perceived quality which is the level of quality of the product that distinguishes it from others in the eyes of customers (Ranjbarian et al., 2012). According to the studies conducted previously, customer evaluates green products through perceived quality, and that influences customer behavior towards green awareness (Wu & Chen, 2014). The contemporary research study will contribute to the body of knowledge pertaining to Pakistani marketplace, where green awareness and green purchase intentions with mediating effect of green trust will enhance the consumers understanding in relation to environmental user friendly products either tangible or intangible.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1. Green Awareness

Nowadays, customer care is on the rise and people tend to be conscious towards the environment (Alamsyah et al., 2019), this is merely due to the increasing damages caused by several kinds of pollution. The consumer consumption pattern of eco-friendly products is a measure of customer care which is referred to 'Green Consumerism' (Ko et al., 2013). Some influences include green awareness that lead to customer care towards eco-friendly products which results to healthy lifestyle. Customer's knowledge of the product is also known as green awareness (Suki et al., 2016). Some characteristics of environment suitable products have an impact on customer's green awareness (Rashid, 2009). The research conducted in the past have focused on green awareness and they aim to identify the measurements that assess the extent of customer's green awareness which could include the attempt by consuming to adopt green products, their knowledge on eco-labels that are present on environmentally friendly products, symbols and slogans of green products understood by customers and their level of consciousness towards environment (Rizwan et al., 2014; Suki, 2013).

2.2. Green Trust

It is essential to understand why it is so important to trust businesses before we define what trust actually is in context of green marketing. Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) way of defining trust is "The classical desire of the consumer to rely on the product's capability in order to accomplish its objective". The element of trust signifies in relation to consumers, which has more probability to evaluate the product or service in favorable terms. Daels (2017) elucidates that the consumer perceives the product as fair, accountable and proficient when assessing trust in the form of expectations. Trust is perceived as a psychological state that involves a desire to embrace vulnerability directing towards positive intents (Foroudi, Nazarian, & Aziz, 2020). Non separately noticeable as compared to other ideas, such as consumer satisfaction, value generation, quality of service, brand recognition, (Harris & Goode, 2004) commitment (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001) and purchasing behavior (Rahbar & Wahid, 2011). Trust is not seen as autonomous. For the concepts discussed, we do not dive in depth rather we tend to illustrate that trust is not independent, as it is an amalgamation of many other several concepts.

The proposition of Green trust is expressed as "a yearning to rely on a product (Chen, 2010), subsequently due to expectations pertaining to its environment friendliness characteristics". Actions pertaining to the sustainability of the environment contain the desire to incorporate environmental, that is resources, the capacity to pay on the higher side for the eco-friendly products as well as the devotion to environment-friendly facilities (Daels, 2017; Tarabieh, 2020). Green trust notion is complimented through the eco-friendliness of products either tangible or intangible that is acknowledged by the end user customers. In such scenarios, end user customers consider those 'green traits or attributes/characteristics' a significant contribution to diminish the proposition of risk termed as perceived risk, increased quality and a boost in overall satisfaction (Mezger, Cabanelas, Cabiddu, & Rüdiger, 2020). Green trust of the consumer in relationship to environment denotes the reliable, credible and standard performance of the

organization (Hameed, & Waris, 2018).

2.3. Green Purchase Intentions

Green purchase intention is defined as the deliberate purchase of products and services with thought of causing less harm to the natural environment. A handful of free market advocates assert that the market automatically gives people all the options, wants and all the information they require, however what consumers are demonstrating is that there are more environmentally suitable options available as compared to what the market has been delivering and valuable information about the societal and environmental impact of the products they might purchase. (Tullani, Saha, & Dahiya, 2019). The motivation behind the consumer's purchases can be identified (Yii, Shein, & Poh Ming, 2020) as a specific behavioral approach or intention. (Whitlark, Geurts, and Swenson 1993) have induced that the intent that leads the customer to purchase illustrates (Bhaskar & Kumar, 2016), that the person is ready to purchase the product after carefully analyzing it. (Tarabieh, Gil-Pechuan, AL-Obaidi, & Al-Haidous, 2020) narrates that the actual behavior and buyer intention can be used conversely.

As detailed by Chen (2010), the perspective of green purchase intention is classified being the tendency that an end user customer would purchase a specific commodity resulting from their environmental essentials. Green purchase intention is furthermore, defined as one's eagerness and likelihood to prefer products that unlike conventional goods have green characteristics (Lasuin & Ng, 2014). The green purchase intent develops the capacity within the consumer to acknowledge green products (Aman, Harun, and Hussein, 2012), leads them to create favorable word of mouth and therefore, prone to pay additionally for them. (Chan and Lau 2002) have acknowledged on the basis of their research regarding America and China about the impact of green purchasing intention on green purchase behavior through a cross-cultural evaluation. In a scenario where the consumer is being committed to a specific green product, chances are that the objective to achieve, this is most expected to exceed which will be the end result from the required purchases. Hence, consumer perception may impact the green product purchases. Hence, purchasing green products intent is characterized as an eagerness of the consumer to buy green products as far as the context of this research is concerned (Yii et al., 2020).

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework
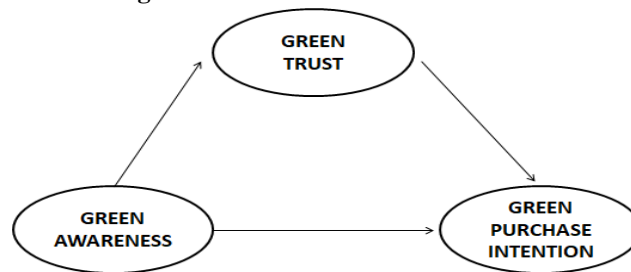
H1: Green Awareness is significantly related to Green Purchase Intentions
H2: Green Awareness is significantly related to Green Trust
H3: Green Awareness has a significant impact on Green Purchase Intentions when Green Trust mediates

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample Size and Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected through convenience sampling based online distribution in the twin cities (Islamabad/Rawalpindi) in Pakistan. Online survey included content that assured responses were voluntary and would be kept strictly confidential. Since all institutions in Pakistan are English medium, the language of the survey was English and was not translated. The study followed a logical structure by first making the fundamental inquiries to assess the respondent's level of awareness to Green Products. Furthermore, their level of trust on Green products was analyzed and some questions were asked in order to find out the customer's purchase behavior e.g., their intention to purchase green products. Finally, demographic data about the participant's age, sex, income and geographic data were collected with the end goal to procure a general review of the sample group of this study. We received 79 responses giving away a response rate of 99%. Since the research was aimed at studying the GPI, we ensured that all respondents had decision making power. Approximately 76.6 % respondents had undergraduate degrees, 18.2 % had a Masters or M.Phil degree, and 5.2 % had Doctoral degrees. 49.4 % of respondents were female and 46.8 % were male.

3.2. Measures

The variables; GA, GT and GPI were measured using closed ended questions. Participant's responded on a common 5 point Likert- scale with anchors 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. The questionnaire for this study is attached in Table A.

3.2.1. Green Awareness

GA was measured by a 3-items questionnaire developed by SK Datta (2011). Examples of items include "I have heard about eco-friendly products" and "I am aware that purchasing eco-friendly products will contribute to the sustainable future." Alpha reliability was 0.834.

3.2.2. Green Trust

We adapted 5-items scale to measure Green Trust developed by Chen (2010). Examples of items for Green Trust include "I feel that eco-friendly product's environmental performance is generally dependable" and "I feel that eco-friendly product's environmental claims are generally Trustworthy". Cronbach's alpha reliability of Green Trust was 0.871.

3.3.3. Green Purchase Intention

GPI was measured with a 7-item scale adapted from Armitage and Conner (1999) and McCarty and Shrum (1994). Examples of the items include ''I intend to buy green products'' and ''Given a choice, I will prefer a green product over a conventional product''. The reliability for this measure was above the conventional standards, i.e. 0.884.

Table-A Research Instruments

Variables	Indicators	Source
Green Awareness	I have heard about eco-friendly products. I am aware of such products. I am aware that purchasing eco-friendly products will contribute to the sustainable future.	(SK Datta, 2011)
Level of Trust on Green Products	You feel that these products' Environmental reputation is generally reliable. You feel that these products' Environmental performance is generally dependable. You feel that these products'environmental claims are generally trustworthy. These products 'environmental concern meets your expectations. This product keeps promises and Commitments for environmental protection	(Chen, 2010)
Level of Purchase Intention for Green Products	I plan to purchase green products. I will purchase green products in my next purchase. Environmental protection is important to me when making product purchases. I believe that green products help to reduce pollution (water, air, etc.) I believe that green products help to save nature and its resources Given a choice, I will prefer a green product over a conventional product.	Adapted from (Armitage and Conner, 1999) (McCarty and Shrum, 1994)

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Construct	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Green Awareness,	3	.834
Green Trust	4	.871
Green Purchase Intention	8	.884

Note. N = 79; Cronbach's alphas presented where α > 0.80

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations,

	Mean	SD	GA	GT	GPI
Green Awareness	4.4051	.70138	1		
Green Trust	3.9177	.65133	.663	1	
GPI	3.6187	.76792	.398	.500	1

N=79

Table 3: Regression analyses for GA, GT, and GPI

Baron and Kenny Approach

	B	ΔR^2	B	Sig
Step 1: GA as Predictor and Green Purchase Intention as dependent variable	.398	.147	.435	.000*
Step 2 : GA as predictor and Green Trust as dependent variable	.663	.433	.616	.000*
Step 3: GA and GT as predictor and GPI as dependent variable	.118	.238	.129	.373
	.421		.497	.002*

N = 79 *p < 0.05

4. Results & Discussion

Table 1 presents the results for reliabilities for all the study variables. The Cronbach's alpha reliability were above the conventional standards, i.e. 0.834, 0.871 and 0.884 respectively. Table 2 presents the data in terms of correlation, the correlation between Green Awareness and Green Trust is the strongest at 0.663 as it is closest to one in contrast to others. While correlation between Green Trust and Green Purchase Intentions is also considered good at 0.500. However, the correlation between Green Awareness and Green Purchase Intentions tends to be the weakest at 0.398 in contrast to others when Green Trust is introduced as a mediating variable in the analysis.
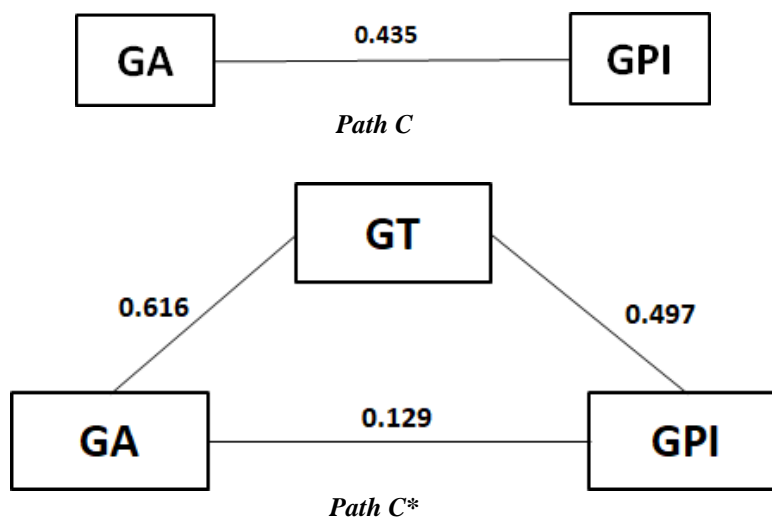
Figure 2: Baron and Kenny Approach

Path C

Path C*

Table 3 presents the data of regression, according to Baron and Kenny; first we run regression to test the significance between the Green Awareness with Green Purchase Intentions. This gave us a beta value of 0.435 with a p-value of 0.000 which is significant.

Secondly, we ran regression analysis for Green Awareness as the predictor variable with Green Trust as the dependent variable, which gave us a beta value 0.616 with a significance of 0.000. Hence, claiming to be significant as well. However, the last step which included testing regression of Green Awareness and Green Trust as the predictor variables with Green Purchase Intentions as the dependent variable gave us the following beta values of 0.129 (Green

Awareness with Green Purchase Intentions) and 0.497 (Green Trust with Green Purchase Intentions) with a significance value of 0.373 and 0.002 respectively. Now, if path C* was to have a value of 0, we would have classified it under the category of full mediation. However, the value tends to be less than its initial path value that is path C which was 0.435 indicating that it is to be classified as partial mediation. Partial mediation is the case in which the path from X (Green Awareness) to Y (Green Purchase Intentions) is reduced in absolute size but is still different from zero when the mediator is introduced. Although, both values of paths A and B are significant while the value of path C is insignificant, it is therefore further classified as indirect mediation (Zhao, X., Lynch Jr, J. G., & Chen, Q. 2010). As mediation corresponds to an indirect effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable that passes through one or more mediator variables. Furthermore, the reason for the insignificant value can be due to insufficient sample size of data.

4.1. Hypothesis Testing

Our framework consists of three hypotheses which are as follows:

H1: Green Awareness is significantly related to Green Purchase Intentions

H2: Green Awareness is significantly related to Green Trust

H3: Green Awareness has a significant effect on Green Purchase Intentions when Green Trust mediates

According to the above analysis and interpretation, H1 and H2 hypotheses are accepted as they project a significant value. Although in case of H3, the hypothesis is accepted due to partial mediation. However, if it were a case of full mediation, then the hypothesis would have been rejected. Therefore, the following results are concluded

H1: Accepted

H2: Accepted

H3: Accepted

5. Conclusion

Our findings and analysis show that Green Awareness significantly impacts Green Purchase Intentions. However, when Green Trust is included in the model as a mediating variable, Green Awareness tends to impact Green Purchase Intentions in a very minimal manner in terms of significance. Whereas Green Trust significantly impacts Green Purchase Intention as a mediator. This case is referred to as Partial Mediation. However, if it were the case of full mediation, we would have concluded that Green Awareness insignificantly impacts Green Purchase Intention.

5.1. Implications for Marketers

Although the study concluded that green awareness does not affect the increase in green purchase intention, however marketers must create green awareness among consumers as it's the beginning to decide to use a product.

Secondly, Green Trust acts as a mediator between Green awareness and Green Purchase Intention, this research study high spot the need to keep deepening into growth of green trust in Pakistan. Thus, green marketing could be additional significant line for future research study perspective. In other words, Marketers should focus more on creating positive awareness of green marketing perspectives. Strategies promoting green trust will benefit the repurchase intention.

Thirdly, the agenda of this research study does not take other antecedents into account due to time constraints. Future research is suggested to involve associated variables for in depth analysis.

5.2. Limitations and Future Research Directions

The contemporary research study has certain limitations and to be taken as opportunities pertaining to future research paradigms. Limitations of this study deal with the respondents taken at a very small scale of 79 participants. Moreover, the research location is focused only in the Twin Cities (Islamabad/Rawalpindi) of Pakistan. Therefore, the results cannot be implied to the entire country. Future researches are suggested to broaden the generalizability of respondents and geographic area.

Second, this study concluded the hypotheses by using questionnaire survey that only deals with cross-sectional data. In other words, this study does not take dynamic changes of in relation to green trust, and towards the proposition of green purchase intentions pertaining to longitudinal data through its different stages. Hence, future research paradigms can state towards the longitudinal research study to explore more about the differences in relation to green trust, and green purchase intentions by exploring more towards its different stages.

The contemporary research results will facilitate, contribute, and will enhance the commercial working of managers, academicians', and researchers and definitely will set a tone for future research references.

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