

Determinants of Green Consumer Behavior: Psychological, Social, Economic, and Contextual Factors

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Abstract - This study critically reviews the psychological, social, economic, and contextual factors influencing green consumer behavior to develop an integrated framework for a better understanding of these influences. Despite extensive research on individual factors, such as environmental awareness and perceived consumer effectiveness, a gap remains in the literature regarding the integration of these elements into a comprehensive framework. By synthesizing existing academic studies, this review identifies key determinants shaping green purchasing decisions: psychological factors, such as environmental concern; social influences, including peer pressure and social norms; economic considerations, such as willingness to pay for eco-friendly products; and contextual factors, including green marketing strategies and product availability. These findings underscore the need for an integrated approach that considers how these factors interact, offering insights into how consumers are motivated to engage in sustainable consumption. This review provides valuable implications for marketers, policymakers, and environmental advocates seeking to promote green consumer behavior through effective strategies. The proposed integrated framework offers a foundation for further research in this area and contributes to the advancement of sustainable consumption practices. By addressing these gaps in understanding, this study provides a more comprehensive perspective on the multifaceted nature of green consumer behavior.

Keywords: Green Consumer Behavior, Sustainable Consumption, Integrated Framework, Environmental Awareness, Green Marketing Strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

Increasing environmental awareness has significantly shifted consumer behavior towards green consumption, driven by global challenges such as climate change, pollution, and resource depletion. Consumers are increasingly prioritizing eco-friendly products, attracting the attention of marketers, policymakers, and environmental advocates who aim to understand the drivers of green purchasing (Barbu *et al.*, 2022). While research has focused on individual determinants, such as environmental awareness and perceived consumer effectiveness, there is a lack of comprehensive frameworks that integrate psychological, social, economic, and contextual factors influencing green consumption (Xia *et al.*, 2022).

This gap presents challenges in efforts to promote sustainable consumption. This study aims to bridge this gap by reviewing the psychological, social, economic, and contextual influences on green consumer behavior and developing an integrated framework. The key research questions include the following: What psychological factors influence green purchasing intentions. How do social dynamics, such as peer influence and social norms, affect green behavior. What economic factors impact willingness to pay for green products. How do contextual factors, such as marketing strategies and product availability, shape consumer attitudes toward green products. This study seeks to elucidate the complex influences on green consumer decisions through a literature review (Ali *et al.*, 2021; Gao *et al.*, 2022; Sari, 2023).

Given the urgency to promote sustainable consumption amidst escalating environmental challenges, this review provides insights into effective marketing strategies and public policies. It also contributes to the academic literature by linking individual determinants with the broader context of green consumption (Khalique *et al.*, 2020; Lin & Hsu, 2013).

Existing literature identifies key factors influencing green consumer behavior. Psychological elements, such as environmental awareness and perceived consumer effectiveness, significantly predict green purchasing intentions (Dewi *et al.*, 2022; Lin & Hsu, 2013). Social influences, including peer pressure and social norms, shape consumer attitudes toward green products (Xia *et al.*, 2022; Ali *et al.*, 2021). Economic considerations, such as willingness to pay for eco-friendly products, are crucial in determining purchasing behavior (Gao *et al.*, 2022; Khalique *et al.*, 2020). Contextual factors, such as green marketing strategies and product availability, also influence consumer decisions (Sari, 2023; Adhitiya & Astuti, 2019). However, integrating these factors into a cohesive framework remains underexplored, necessitating further research.

This review focuses on the academic literature on green consumer behavior, excluding primary data collection, to critically analyze and synthesize findings on the psychological, social, economic, and contextual factors

affecting green purchasing decisions. It examines existing research and discusses the integration of these influences into a unified framework, offering recommendations for future research to refine the understanding of green consumer behavior.

This review aims to provide an integrated framework that captures the complexities of green consumer behavior and offers insights for marketers and policymakers to promote sustainable consumption practices. It addresses gaps in the academic literature by providing a comprehensive understanding of green consumer behavior determinants (Barbu *et al.*, 2022; Dewi *et al.*, 2022).

Studies such as those by Mohamedunni Alias Musthafa and Sajila (2018) on sustainability among students, Parameswari and Saravanan (2019) on online shopping behaviors, and Santhoshkumar and Sekar (2012) on economic factors, along with Varghese and Paul's (2019) research on consumer self-regulation, contribute to understanding the diverse factors influencing green consumer behavior and enhance the integration of these elements into a comprehensive framework.

II. CRITICAL REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Increasing awareness of environmental issues has driven significant shifts in consumer behavior, particularly within the realm of green consumption. As concerns about climate change, pollution, and resource depletion grow, individuals are becoming more conscious of their consumption patterns, prioritizing eco-friendly and sustainable products. This shift, referred to as green consumer behavior, has drawn considerable attention from marketers, policymakers, and environmental advocates seeking to understand the factors driving these purchasing decisions. While much research has focused on individual determinants, such as environmental awareness and perceived impact, a gap remains in the literature regarding the integration of psychological, social, economic, and contextual factors that collectively influence consumers' decisions to purchase eco-friendly products (Barbu *et al.*, 2022; Xia *et al.*, 2022).

Psychological factors are foundational in shaping green consumer behavior, as intrinsic motivations, such as environmental concern and personal values, strongly influence purchasing intentions. Research indicates that identified motivation-when personal values align with environmental actions-significantly affects green consumer behavior (Gilal *et al.*, 2019). Other critical psychological determinants, such as perceived consumer effectiveness (PCE) and environmental knowledge (EK), also play key roles in encouraging green consumption (Ansari *et al.*, 2022). Consumers who believe their actions can positively impact the environment are more likely to engage in sustainable practices, and those who identify as environmentally conscious are even more inclined to make green purchases (Gravelines *et al.*, 2022; Michaud & Llerena, 2010).

Social factors further shape green consumer behavior, with demographic variables, such as age and gender, influencing consumer decisions. Studies suggest that women generally exhibit stronger intrinsic motivations toward green purchasing, whereas men may respond more to external or identified motivations (Gilal *et al.*, 2019). Age also plays a significant role, as younger consumers are often more willing to adopt sustainable practices due to heightened environmental awareness (Vistharakula & Kaushik, 2021).

Social norms and peer influences are crucial in shaping attitudes toward green products, as individuals tend to align their behaviors with those of their reference groups. Social media and marketing strategies have also been shown to significantly influence consumer behavior, with social influence acting as a powerful driver of green consumer decisions (Xiao *et al.*, 2022).

Economic factors are equally important in determining consumer behavior toward green products. A key economic consideration is willingness to pay (WtP) for eco-friendly products, which can often be hindered by the perceived costs associated with such products. Research has shown that consumers frequently face trade-offs between the perceived benefits of green products and their higher costs, which impacts their purchasing decisions (Michaud & Llerena, 2010). Barriers such as perceived risks and a lack of environmental knowledge further contribute to the gap between pro-environmental attitudes and actual purchasing behavior (Sharma, 2021). The economic context, including income levels and the availability of green products in the market, also significantly impacts consumer choices (Nath *et al.*, 2013).

Finally, contextual factors, such as green marketing strategies and the broader consumer environment, play a crucial role in influencing green consumer behavior. Strategies such as eco-labeling and sustainable branding can effectively raise consumer awareness, thereby guiding purchasing decisions toward more sustainable options (Sah, 2016). Additionally, the ongoing transition to a circular economy that encourages the reuse and recycling of products emphasizes the importance of consumer engagement in sustainable practices (Testa *et al.*, 2020). However, the relationship between consumer attitudes and actual behavior can be complex, as many consumers express intentions to purchase green products but fail to follow through due to various contextual barriers (Paço *et al.*, 2019).

Green consumer behavior is a complex phenomenon shaped by psychological motivations, social influences, economic considerations, and contextual factors. A deeper understanding of these interconnected influences can help develop more effective strategies to promote sustainable consumption and address the gap between consumer intentions and actual purchasing behavior. Future research should continue to explore the interplay between these factors to refine our understanding of green consumer

behavior, ultimately informing marketing strategies and public policies aimed at fostering sustainable consumption practices (Barbu *et al.*, 2022; Dewi *et al.*, 2022).

III. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a critical literature review approach to identify and synthesize the determinants of green consumer behavior with the aim of developing an integrated conceptual framework. The review process involved searching academic databases, such as Google Scholar and Semantic Scholar, using keywords related to green consumer behavior, sustainable consumption, psychological factors, economic barriers, and social influences to retrieve relevant articles. A careful selection of studies was conducted, focusing on recent research to ensure the inclusion of current perspectives.

The reviewed articles were critically analyzed to identify key variables influencing green consumer behavior. These variables were categorized into four main groups: psychological, social, economic, and contextual. Psychological factors, such as environmental concern, intrinsic motivation, perceived consumer effectiveness, environmental knowledge, and self-identity, were found to directly influence green consumer behavior. Social factors, including demographic variables, social norms, peer influence, and social media influence, were identified as having a direct impact on consumer attitudes and green purchasing behaviors. Economic factors, such as willingness to pay for green products, and perceived economic barriers, such as price sensitivity, were shown to directly affect consumers' decisions to purchase green products. Contextual factors, such as green marketing strategies, eco-labeling, and the shift toward a circular economy, were found to influence consumer awareness and purchasing behavior.

A conceptual framework for green consumer behavior was developed by integrating the identified constructs, reflecting their direct relationship with consumer behavior. This approach draws on the process used in prior research, such as Raghavendra and Shivaprasad (2024), who developed a framework for entrepreneurial intention by integrating individual, contextual, and educational factors. Similarly, Raghavendra and MG (2024) integrated technological advancements to enhance the consumer experience and trust in retail. These frameworks provide a basis for understanding how different factors interact to influence outcomes, thereby informing the development of this conceptual framework for green consumer behavior. The framework integrates psychological, social, economic, and contextual factors to offer a comprehensive understanding of the drivers of green consumer behavior. Each factor was found to have a direct influence on consumers' green purchasing intentions. This conceptual model serves as a foundation for future research and practical applications aimed at promoting sustainable energy consumption.

IV. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

A. Psychological Factors

Psychological factors form the foundation of green consumer behavior by addressing the intrinsic and cognitive aspects that drive sustainable actions. Intrinsic motivations, such as environmental concerns and personal values, act as powerful drivers of green purchasing intentions (Gilal *et al.*, 2019). Identified motivation, which aligns personal values with environmental actions, has been shown to significantly influence green consumer behavior. Furthermore, perceived consumer effectiveness (PCE), or the belief that individual actions can make a difference, plays a critical role in enhancing purchase intentions for eco-friendly products (Michaud & Llerena, 2010). Environmental knowledge (EK) is another crucial determinant, empowering consumers to make informed choices that support sustainability (Ansari *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, self-identity, wherein individuals perceive themselves as environmentally conscious, strengthens their commitment to sustainable consumption practices (Gravelines *et al.*, 2022).

B. Social Factors

Social influence significantly shapes green consumer behavior by reflecting the impact of demographic variables, peer dynamics, and cultural norms. Gender differences are prominent, with women generally exhibiting stronger intrinsic motivations for green consumption compared to men, who may respond more to external incentives (Gilal *et al.*, 2019). Similarly, younger consumers are often more inclined toward sustainable practices due to their greater environmental awareness and exposure to eco-friendly lifestyles (Vistharakula & Kaushik, 2021). Social norms and peer influence also play an essential role, as individuals often model their behavior based on the expectations and actions of their social groups (Xiao *et al.*, 2022). The rise of social media has further amplified these dynamics, serving as a platform for spreading environmental awareness and influencing consumer choices (Xiao *et al.*, 2022).

C. Economic Factors

Economic considerations are critical in determining consumers' willingness to adopt green products. Willingness to pay (WtP) for green products is influenced by the trade-offs between perceived benefits and costs. Many consumers hesitate to pay a premium for sustainable products due to economic constraints or uncertainties regarding product efficacy (Michaud & Llerena, 2010). Perceived risks, such as concerns about quality or performance, along with a lack of environmental knowledge, can deter consumers from making green purchases despite having positive attitudes (Sharma, 2021). Additionally, income levels and the availability of eco-friendly alternatives in the market shape the accessibility of green products (Nath *et al.*, 2013). Overcoming these economic barriers is essential for fostering widespread green consumer behavior.

D. Contextual Factors

Contextual factors pertain to the external environment and situational variables that influence green consumer behavior. Green marketing strategies, such as eco-labeling and sustainable branding, play a vital role in creating consumer awareness and enhancing the perceived value of green products (Sah, 2016). The transition toward a circular economy that emphasizes resource efficiency and waste minimization requires active consumer participation and an understanding of sustainable practices (Testa *et al.*, 2020). However, contextual barriers, such as a lack of infrastructure or misleading marketing claims, often create a gap between consumer intentions and actual behavior (Paço *et al.*, 2019). Addressing these contextual challenges can

help bridge this gap and encourage consistent green purchasing behavior.

E. Green Consumer Behavior

At the core of the framework is green consumer behavior, which reflects the outcome of interactions among psychological, social, economic, and contextual factors. Sustainable consumption is not merely a product of individual choices but a result of complex interdependencies between internal and external motivations (Paço *et al.*, 2019). This dynamic interplay underscores the importance of addressing multiple factors to promote environmentally responsible consumption and bridge the gap between consumer intentions and actions.

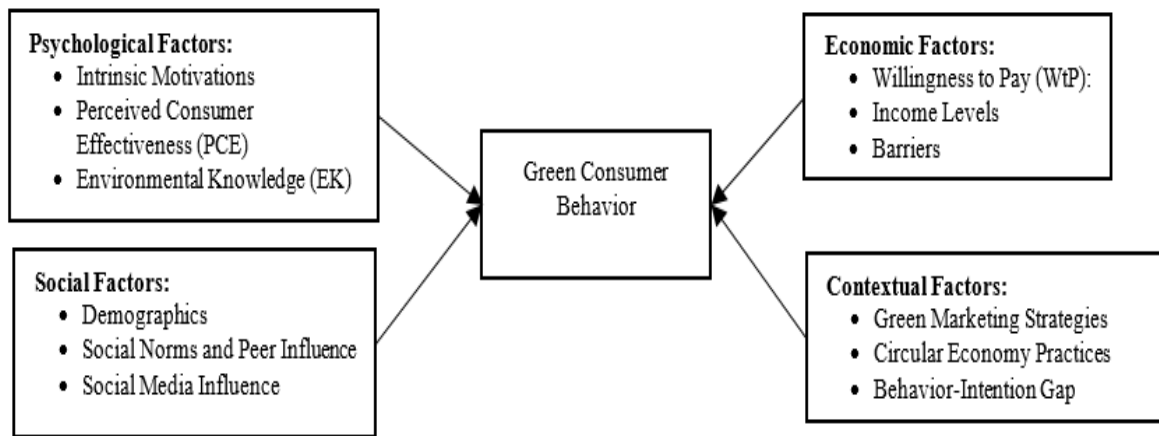


Fig. 1 Proposed Conceptual Framework

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results and discussion of the key determinants of green consumer behavior, specifically addressing the psychological, social, economic, and contextual factors influencing consumer decisions regarding sustainable products. It also provides insights into the complex interactions among these factors, addressing the research questions regarding their roles in shaping green consumer behavior.

A. Psychological Factors Influencing Green Consumer Behavior

Psychological factors are central to understanding green consumer behavior. Intrinsic motivations, such as environmental concerns and personal values, have been found to significantly influence consumers' green purchasing intentions. Identified motivation, which aligns personal values with environmental actions, has a strong effect on green consumer behavior (Gilal *et al.*, 2019).

Moreover, perceived consumer effectiveness (PCE) and environmental knowledge (EK) are crucial psychological drivers that enhance consumers' intentions to purchase green products. Consumers who believe their actions can positively impact the environment are more likely to engage

in green consumption (Michaud & Llerena, 2010). Self-identity also plays a significant role in shaping sustainable consumption behaviors, with individuals identifying as environmentally conscious being more likely to engage in green purchasing (Gravelines *et al.*, 2022). These findings confirm that fostering intrinsic motivation and psychological connections to environmental issues can significantly encourage green consumption behavior.

B. Social Factors and Their Impact on Green Consumer Behavior

Social factors play a significant role in shaping consumer behavior. Demographic variables, such as age and gender, along with social influences, such as peer pressure and social norms, affect consumer attitudes toward eco-friendly products. Research shows that women generally exhibit stronger intrinsic motivations for green purchasing compared to men, who may respond more to external or identified motivations (Gilal *et al.*, 2019). Age is another important determinant, as younger consumers are more likely to adopt sustainable practices due to increased environmental awareness (Vistharakula & Kaushik, 2021).

Peer influence and social norms also shape consumer attitudes toward green products. In particular, social media has a significant impact on consumer behavior, as

individuals tend to align their behaviors with those of their reference groups (Xiao *et al.*, 2022). These findings underscore the crucial role of social dynamics in influencing green consumer behavior, indicating that social support and influence are essential drivers of sustainable consumption.

C. Economic Considerations and Their Role in Green Consumer Behavior

Economic factors are critical for understanding green consumer behavior. Willingness to pay (WtP) for green products is one of the most important economic factors influencing purchasing decisions. Consumers often face trade-offs between the perceived benefits of green products and their higher costs, which can hinder their willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly options (Michaud & Llerena, 2010). Furthermore, barriers such as perceived risks and a lack of environmental knowledge can create gaps between consumers' pro-environmental attitudes and their actual purchasing behaviors (Sharma, 2021). The economic context, including income levels and the availability of green products, further influences consumer decisions (Nath *et al.*, 2013). These findings emphasize that while there is growing awareness of the benefits of green products, affordability remains a significant barrier to their widespread adoption. Thus, economic factors are crucial in determining consumer behavior, affecting their willingness to pay for green products, and shaping the overall sustainability of consumption.

D. Contextual Factors and Their Influence on Green Consumer Behavior

Contextual factors, such as green marketing strategies and the availability of eco-friendly products, play an essential role in shaping consumer behavior. Green marketing initiatives, including eco-labeling and sustainable branding, significantly enhance consumer awareness and influence purchasing behavior (Sah, 2016). Moreover, the shift toward a circular economy, emphasizing recycling and product reuse, also contributes to driving green consumer behavior (Testa *et al.*, 2020).

However, despite these efforts, many consumers express intentions to purchase green products but fail to follow through due to contextual barriers, such as a lack of trust in marketing claims and inadequate product availability (Paço *et al.*, 2019). These findings underscore the importance of implementing effective green marketing strategies and ensuring that green products are readily available and accessible to consumers. Although increased awareness through marketing strategies can drive consumer engagement, overcoming the barriers between consumer attitudes and actual behavior is essential to encourage widespread green consumption.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the psychological, social, economic, and contextual factors influencing green consumer behavior and to develop an integrated framework for understanding these influences. The findings highlight that psychological factor, such as environmental concern, perceived consumer effectiveness, and self-identity, significantly impact consumers' green purchasing intentions. Social factors, including peer influence, social norms, and demographic variables such as age and gender, also play a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior. Economic considerations, such as willingness to pay for green products and perceived cost-benefit trade-offs, are significant determinants of purchasing decisions. Additionally, contextual factors, such as green marketing strategies and the availability of sustainable products, contribute to the overall consumer attitude toward green consumption. These results provide valuable insights for marketers and policymakers in promoting sustainable consumption practices. Understanding the interplay among psychological, social, economic, and contextual factors can help develop more effective strategies to encourage green purchasing behaviors and bridge the gap between consumer intentions and actual behaviors. However, the study acknowledges some limitations, such as the exclusion of primary data and the focus on a literature-review-based analysis. Future research could explore the integration of primary data, longitudinal studies, and the effects of different cultural contexts on green consumer behavior. Further investigation into the role of technology, consumer education, and the global supply chain could offer additional insights into promoting green consumption on a global scale. In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of a multifaceted approach to understanding green consumer behavior. By synthesizing various determinants, this study offers a comprehensive framework that contributes to both the academic literature and practical applications in sustainability marketing and policy development.

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