

Understanding Consumer Behavioral Dynamics in Green Marketing Contexts: Evidence from Emerging Markets



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Abstract

This paper seeks to examine the effect of environmental awareness, green perception, brand loyalty, and economic consequences on the purchasing intentions of consumers. A structured questionnaire was used to do descriptive and causal research. We got primary data from 256 Nepali consumers. We used SPSS to do correlation and regression analyses to see how the variables were related based on the Theory of Planned Behavior. The results show that green perception and economic consequences are the dominant indicators of whether or not someone would consume green products. Although environmental awareness contributes positively, brand loyalty does not significantly affect consumers' decisions to buy green products. The research validates that economic and perceptual factors exert greater influence than emotional brand attachment on green consumer behavior in developing markets such as Nepal. To get more people to use green products, marketers and policymakers could focus on making credible green claims and showing how they can save money. Interventions that increase awareness and lower skepticism can speed up patterns of sustainable consumption. This research adds value to the green consumption in developing economies.

Keywords – Brand loyalty, Environmental awareness, Green marketing, Green perception, Purchase intention, Sustainable consumption

Paper – Research Paper

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1. Introduction

Sustainability has become a major concern for people, governments, and businesses as environmental problems around the world become more urgent (Chaudhary et al., 2024; Joshi & Rahman, 2015). Climate change, pollution of air and water, deforestation, and a lack of resources are no longer minor problems; they are major problems that affect how people shop and how businesses act. As a result, people are starting to put more value on goods and services that are good for the environment, which is forcing businesses to change (Peattie & Crane, 2005). One important response to this change is the use of green marketing, which is when you market products, services, or practices in a way that emphasizes their environmental benefits (Polonsky, 1994). Green marketing has grown from a niche strategy to a key part of how businesses in all fields work (Peattie & Crane, 2005). It includes a lot of different things, such as making products that are good for the environment, using production methods that are good for the environment, using packaging that can be recycled or broken down, and being honest about a company's environmental commitments (Chen, 2010).

Green marketing, on the other hand, puts environmental sustainability at the center of a business's strategic direction. Traditional marketing, on the other hand, focuses on making as much money as possible and keeping customers happy (Leonidou et al., 2013). This method not only lessens the negative effects of business on the environment, but it also lets businesses meet the growing demand from customers for environmental responsibility (Rahbar & Wahid, 2011). In addition, it helps the brand stay in the long run by linking the company to moral and forward-thinking values (Chen & Chang, 2013). Recent research indicates that a considerable portion of consumers is prepared to pay a premium for products regarded as environmentally friendly (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). Environmental knowledge, perceived effectiveness of green products, brand trust, and authenticity of green claims significantly influence consumer purchase intentions (Nguyen et al., 2019; Leonidou et al., 2013). Also, when customers think a company is really committed to sustainability, green brand positioning can help build customer loyalty and positive word-of-mouth marketing (Chen, 2010; Ottman et al., 2006).

But green marketing only works if you don't greenwash, which is when you make false or exaggerated claims about how good a product is for the environment. People are becoming more picky and skeptical, so it's important for messages to be clear and consistent (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). If a brand is caught lying about its environmental impact, it can hurt its reputation a lot and lose customers' trust (Chen & Chang, 2013). From a strategic point of view, businesses that put money into green innovations and ethical environmental practices not only meet regulatory requirements and corporate social responsibility (CSR) goals, but they also get a competitive edge in a market that is becoming more focused on sustainability (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017; Leonidou et al., 2013). Green marketing has two goals: to help the planet and to make money.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Theoretical Review

This chapter looks at important research on green marketing and how people act as consumers. In the 1960s and 1970s, as people became more aware of the environment, green marketing began to take shape. The AMA made it official in 1975, which led to more academic research (Peattie & Crane, 2005). Green marketing was first thought of as a reaction, but now it is a planned way to meet customer needs while causing the least amount of harm to the environment (Kotler, 2011). Businesses are becoming more and more important for sustainability as they respond to pressure from regulators and customers.

The modern green marketing mix changes the 4Ps: product, price, place, and promotion, to make them more eco-friendly (Grant, 2007). Nike's use of recycled materials is an example of how products are made to have less of an impact on the environment. Prices reflect green value, and a lot of the time, people are willing to pay more for health or emotional benefits (Ottman et al., 2006). Distribution focuses on eco-friendliness and getting materials from nearby sources. Promotion focuses on eco-labeling and being open, but it can still be hurt by greenwashing, which is when false environmental claims hurt consumer trust (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). This theory elucidates the influence of personal beliefs and external pressures on consumer decision-making within the realm of green marketing.

Variables Used in the Study

Environmental Awareness

In Nepal, environmental issues like deforestation, air pollution, and plastic waste have raised concern, especially in cities such as Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Pokhara. Environmental awareness refers to recognizing these issues and believing individual actions like reducing waste or choosing eco-friendly products can help. Efforts by schools, NGOs, and initiatives like “Clean City Green City” have increased awareness, but behavior change remains limited due to infrastructure and policy gaps (Shrestha & Joshi, 2020; Adhikari & Shrestha, 2021). Higher environmental knowledge is linked to stronger eco-friendly attitudes (Joshi & Rahman, 2015; Kanchanapibul et al., 2014; Suki, 2016). In this study, it refers to understanding issues and personal responsibility.

Green Perception

Green perception describes how Nepali consumers interpret companies’ sustainability claims. Weak regulations increase skepticism toward greenwashing (Poudel & Bhattarai, 2021). It includes awareness, understanding, trust, and perceived impact of green initiatives. Clear and consistent environmental practices improve trust (Leonidou et al., 2011; Chen & Chang, 2012; Rahbar & Wahid, 2011). As firms adopt eco-labels, perception is shaped by media and observed actions. In this study, it refers to how consumers evaluate and trust green claims.

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is emotional attachment and repeat purchase behavior. In Nepal, it depends on how consistently brands demonstrate sustainability. Consumers who trust a brand’s environmental commitment are more likely to recommend and repurchase (Hartmann & Ibáñez, 2006; Nguyen et al., 2019). Local and social enterprises gain loyalty by supporting environmental causes (Koirala et al., 2022; Adhikari & Shrestha, 2021). This trend is stronger among youth and urban consumers. In this study, it refers to trust, advocacy, and continued preference for green brands.

Economic Consequences

Price sensitivity is a key factor in Nepal, especially among lower-income groups. While some green products are expensive, others offer long-term value. This includes willingness to buy, pay a premium, and evaluate environmental impact (Young et al., 2010; Thøgersen & Zhou, 2012). Despite awareness, cost remains a barrier, though urban consumers increasingly consider value beyond price (Shrestha & Joshi, 2020; Adhikari & Shrestha, 2021). In this study, it refers to perceived cost, affordability, and value.

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is the likelihood of buying eco-friendly products and reflects the final decision stage (Ajzen, 1991). It includes willingness to buy green, respond to eco-marketing, and prefer ethical products. In Nepal, intention is increasing, but behavior is limited by availability, price, and familiarity (Adhikari & Shrestha, 2021; Koirala et al., 2022; Pokhrel et al., 2024; Shrestha & Joshi, 2020). In this study, it refers to choosing green products based on environmental values.

Relationship between Variables

Environmental Awareness and Purchase Intention

Environmental awareness means that people know about environmental issues and believe that they can help solve them by doing something. Studies have indicated that increased environmental awareness significantly influences eco-conscious behavior, including purchase intention (Joshi & Rahman, 2015; Kanchanapibul et al., 2014). In Nepal, the effects of climate change that people can see more clearly, like air pollution in Kathmandu and glaciers melting in the Himalayas, have helped raise public awareness (Shrestha & Joshi, 2020). Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (1991) posits that awareness facilitates the formation of attitudes, which subsequently affect behavior. Research conducted in Nepal and other developing nations indicates that individuals possessing heightened ecological awareness are more likely to exhibit robust intentions to engage in green purchasing (Adhikari & Shrestha, 2021; Suki, 2016). Based on the preceding arguments, it is posited that;

Hypothesis (H1): Environmental Awareness influences Green Purchase Intention.

Green Perception and Purchase Intention

Green perception shows how people judge how honest and effective a company's environmental practices are. A good impression builds trust, brand credibility, and interest in the product (Chen & Chang, 2012; Leonidou et al., 2011). In Nepal, where institutional oversight of green claims is inadequate, consumers frequently

exhibit skepticism unless green messaging is substantiated by tangible actions (Poudel & Bhattarai, 2021). The TPB says that subjective norms, which are based on social and business values, affect intention. Consequently, when consumers believe that companies are genuinely promoting sustainability, they are more inclined to adjust their purchasing decisions accordingly (Koirala et al., 2022; Pokhrel et al., 2024; Rahbar & Wahid, 2011). Based on the aforementioned arguments, it is posited that;

Hypothesis (H2): Green Perception influences Green Purchase Intention.

Brand Loyalty and Purchase Intention

Brand loyalty means that a customer prefers a brand for a long time, usually because they are happy with it, trust it, and have an emotional connection to it. Previous studies indicate that loyal customers are more likely to repurchase and endorse brands they trust (Hartmann & Ibáñez, 2006). In Nepal, consumers who are loyal to local eco-friendly brands often keep buying them even when they are hard to find or cost more. This is because they share the same values and identity (Chaudhary et al., 2025; Koirala et al., 2022). Emotional ties and shared values are very important when it comes to socially responsible consumption (Nguyen et al., 2019). Loyalty not only maintains enduring customer relationships but also results in active purchasing intent. Based on the arguments above, it is hypothesized as follows:

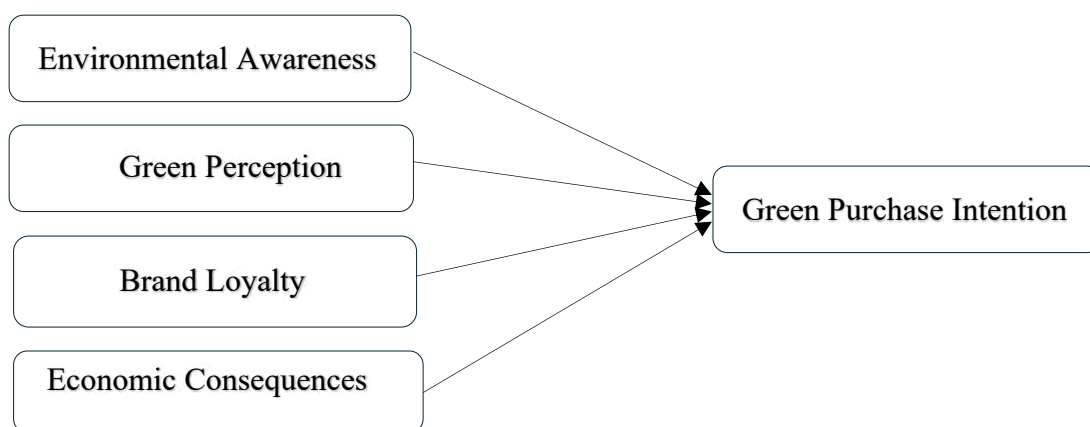
Hypothesis (H3): Brand Loyalty influences Green Purchase Intention.

Economic Consequences and Purchase Intention

When people in Nepal make decisions about what to buy, they think about money. This is especially true in economies that are sensitive to price. Some people don't want to buy green products because they cost more, but others who know that they will be good for their health and save energy in the long run are more willing to pay more (Young et al., 2010; Thøgersen & Zhou, 2012). The TPB's idea of perceived behavioral control stresses that intentions are affected by how affordable and doable something is. In Nepal, urban consumers possessing elevated education and income levels are more inclined to accept the expense of green products if they perceive it as beneficial for health or environmental sustainability (Adhikari & Shrestha, 2021; Shrestha & Joshi, 2020). Based on the arguments above, it is hypothesized that

Hypothesis (H4): Economic Consequences influence Green Purchase Intention.

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework



Note. Joshi and Rahman (2015); Ajzen's (1991)

3. Research Methods

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative research design to investigate the effect of green marketing on consumer behavior in Nepal. The study adheres to a positivist ontology, positioning a singular observable reality and facilitating hypothesis testing through objective data (Creswell, 2014). The study aimed to examine the influence of environmental awareness, green perception, brand loyalty, and economic consequences on green purchase intention, utilizing the cross-sectional data. The data were gathered at a single point in time through

a structured questionnaire, aligning with prior studies on green marketing and consumer behavior (Joshi & Rahman, 2015; Chen & Chang, 2012). This design facilitated the identification of patterns and relationships among variables through descriptive, correlational, and causal research.

Population and Sample

The population consisted of general consumers who had the capacity to purchase environmentally friendly products, encompassing various age groups, income levels, educational backgrounds, and geographic areas. For this research, convenience sampling method was used enhanced by snowball referrals (Hair et al., 2016; Kumar, 2011; Naderifar et al., 2017). A total of 300 digital questionnaires were sent out online using web links. Of those, 256 were valid responses. This sample size was larger than the minimum threshold for multivariate research, which made sure that the analysis was accurate (Hair et al., 2016). Respondents came from cities (47.7%), suburbs (30.9%), and rural areas (21.5%), giving a full picture of how people in different parts of Nepal feel about green products.

Measurement

We used a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to collect data. The items were changed from validated studies to fit the Nepali consumer context. We used items from Joshi and Rahman (2015) to measure Environmental Awareness, Chen and Chang (2012) to measure Green Perception, Hartmann and Ibáñez (2006) and Koirala et al. (2022) to measure Brand Loyalty, Thøgersen and Zhou (2012) and Young et al. (2010) to measure Economic Consequences, and Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior to measure Purchase Intention. Demographic data encompassed age, gender, education, income, occupation, and geographical location. A pilot test with 30 Nepali consumers confirmed clarity and cultural relevance, with all constructs exhibiting satisfactory reliability (Cronbach's alpha>0.70) according to Pallant (2020).

Table 1
Reliability test

Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Environmental Awareness	5	0.749
Green Perception	4	0.737
Brand Loyalty	5	0.757
Economic Consequences	5	0.758
Green Purchase Intention	5	0.765

4. Analysis and Results

Table 2
Demographic profile of the respondents

S. No.	Particulars	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age Group	15-20	26	10.2%
		20-30	139	54.3%
		30-40	48	18.8%
		40-50	42	16.4%
		50-60	1	0.4%

S. No.	Particulars	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
2	Location	Urban	122	47.7%
		Sub-urban	79	30.9%
		Rural	55	21.5%
3	Gender	Male	113	44.1%
		Female	141	55.1%
		other	2	0.8%
4	Income	Low	102	39.8%
		Medium	90	35.2%
		High	64	25.0%
5	Education	High school	35	13.7%
		Undergraduate	125	48.8%
		Postgraduate	91	35.5%
		Other	5	2.0%
6	Occupation	Student	70	27.3%
		Government Employee	30	11.7%
		Private Sector	53	20.7%
		Business Owner	41	16.0%
		Other	62	24.2%

Table 2 reveals that 54.3% of the 256 people who answered were between the ages of 20 and 30, 18.8% were between the ages of 30 and 40, 16.4% were between the ages of 40 and 50, and 0.4% were older than 50. 55.1% of the people were women, 44.1% were men, and 0.8% were other genders. 47.7% of the people lived in cities, 30.9% lived in suburbs, and 21.5% lived in rural areas. 39.8% of people had low incomes, 35.2% had medium incomes, and 25% had high incomes. 48.8% of them were undergraduates, 35.5% were postgraduates, and 13.7% were high school graduates. 27.3% of the people were students, 20.7% were private employees, 16% were business owners, 11.7% were government workers, and 24.2% were in other jobs.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Green Awareness	256	1.00	5.00	3.8848	.94527
Green Perception	256	2.00	5.00	4.0703	.53590
Economic Consequences	256	1.50	5.00	4.1221	.57394
Brand Loyalty	256	1.00	5.00	1.8827	.80743
Purchase Intention	256	2.90	5.00	4.0593	.40408
Valid N (list-wise)	256				

Table 5 shows a summary of the regression analysis and the values of VIF and tolerance. The multiple regression analysis shows that Green Awareness, Green Perception, and Economic Consequences have a significant effect on Purchase Intention, but Brand Loyalty does not. The model fits well overall ($R = 0.820$; $R^2 = 0.672$), which means that the four predictors explain 67.2% of the difference in Purchase Intention. The ANOVA results show that the model is statistically significant ($F = 128.57$, $p < 0.001$). Green Perception ($\beta = 0.581$, $p < 0.001$) has the strongest positive effect of all the predictors. Green Awareness ($\beta = 0.353$, $p < 0.001$) and Economic Consequences ($\beta = 0.292$, $p < 0.001$) come next. Brand Loyalty has not significant effect ($\beta = -0.007$, $p = 0.845$). These results underscore that consumers' intention to purchase green products is primarily influenced by their perceptions, awareness, and perceived economic advantages, rather than emotional brand loyalty.

5. Discussion

This study investigated the interconnections among awareness, green perception, brand loyalty, economic consequences, and purchase intention, elucidating intricate insights into consumer behavior concerning eco-friendly products. The results indicated that economic consequences exert the most significant impact on purchase intention, implying that consumers are predominantly driven by perceived financial advantages or savings linked to green products. This is in line with earlier studies by Basnet et al. (2024), Lee (2019) and Smith and Jones (2020) who stressed how important economic incentives are for encouraging sustainable consumption. These results show that consumers really do think about how much money they can save when they decide whether or not to buy green alternatives. The moderate correlation between green perception and purchase intention further substantiates the notion that environmental attitudes serve as significant motivators, although frequently hidden by economic factors.

Green et al. (2018) similarly found that consumers' concern for the environment only leads to buying behavior when there are other clear benefits. Brand loyalty had a strong positive effect on purchase intention, which is interesting because it supports Kumar and Shah's (2021) findings about how emotional bonds and trust shape consumer preferences. This indicates that in addition to functional advantages, consumers depend on their loyalty and trust in brands to influence their environmentally conscious purchasing choices.

In contrast to earlier studies that emphasized awareness as a key factor influencing green purchasing (Brown & Taylor, 2017), our research indicated that awareness alone exerted a comparatively weak influence on both brand loyalty and purchase intention. This shows that awareness alone is not enough to change people's behavior; it needs to be backed up by economic incentives or a strong brand trust. The results show that there are many factors that work together to encourage sustainable consumer behavior, and all of these factors need to be dealt with at the same time. So, these results show that marketers and policymakers should not only work to raise awareness, but also show how green purchases can save money and build brand loyalty. This all-encompassing strategy is essential for transforming consumers from mere awareness to active participation and acquisition of environmentally friendly products.

6. Conclusions

Based on the results, a mix of cognitive, economic, and emotional factors affects sustainable consumer behavior. It is important to know about green issues and products, but just knowing about them doesn't mean you'll buy them or stay loyal to them. Instead, the perceived economic effects and the brand loyalty that already exists are more important. This means that to successfully promote green products, you need to do more than just tell people about them. Brands need to build trust and loyalty in order to turn consumers' green perceptions into actual purchases. They also need to make sure that the economic benefits, like cost savings or incentives, are clear.

The study shows that green purchase intentions are complicated and that consumer behavior is affected by many factors that work together, not just one. To create better interventions and marketing campaigns that encourage sustainable consumption in the real world, we need to understand this complexity. Companies and policymakers can create stronger incentives and deeper connections with consumers by combining economic, perceptual, and emotional factors. This will help them reach their environmental goals.

7. Implication

This research provides significant insights into both the theoretical and practical aspects of green marketing. It shows that even though being aware of the environment is still important, people's plans to buy things are more affected by how green they think a product is and how much money they think it will save them. Brand loyalty, on the other hand, doesn't have much of an effect on green buying choices in this case. These results indicate that conventional models centered primarily on awareness are inadequate, underscoring the necessity for a more holistic theoretical framework that incorporates cognitive, economic, and emotional factors to enhance the understanding of sustainable consumer behavior.

From a practical point of view, marketers should stop running simple awareness campaigns and instead focus on making it clear how green products can help the environment and save money. Trust can be built even more by making emotional connections with customers through clear branding, quality assurance, and active engagement. This can also encourage green purchases. Companies can get people to buy more and stay loyal to sustainable brands over the long term by combining economic incentives with emotional appeal. This is especially true in emerging markets like Nepal.

8. Limitations and Direction for Future Research

There are some limitations to this study that should be kept in mind when looking at the results. First, the utilization of convenience and snowball sampling may restrict the generalizability of the findings to the wider Nepalese population. Second, the cross-sectional design limits the capacity to deduce causal relationships among the variables. The study concentrated on a restricted array of predictors, omitting other potentially significant variables, including social norms, cultural values, and environmental policies. Lastly, self-reported measures might be affected by response bias. Future studies could mitigate these limitations by utilizing probability sampling methods and longitudinal designs to more effectively determine causality. Adding social, cultural, and policy-related factors to the model would give us a better idea of how green consumers act. Furthermore, qualitative methods may provide more profound insights into the motivations and obstacles consumers encounter in the adoption of sustainable products. Investigating various demographic cohorts and geographic areas within Nepal would further augment the relevance of forthcoming findings.

Conflict of Interest

Authors declare no conflict of interest while preparing this article.

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Appendix

Environmental Consciousness

SN	Statement	SD-1	D-2	N-3	A-4	SA-5
1	I am aware of environmental issues in Nepal, such as air pollution and waste management.					
2	I try to use eco-friendly products in my daily life.					
3	I am willing to pay a little more for products that are environmentally friendly.					
4	I believe individual actions can help reduce environmental problems in Nepal.					
5	I prefer to buy from brands that are environmentally responsible.					

SD- Strongly Disagree, D- Disagree, N- Neutral, A- Agree, SA- Strongly Agree

Awareness of Green Marketing in Nepal

SN	Statement	SD-1	D-2	N-3	A-4	SA-5
6	I have noticed Nepali companies promoting eco-friendly products or practices.					
7	I understand what green marketing means and how it benefits the environment.					
8	I trust companies that claim to be environmentally friendly.					
9	I think green marketing is important for Nepal's sustainable development.					
10	I feel that some companies use green marketing just to attract customers.					

SD- Strongly Disagree, D- Disagree, N- Neutral, A- Agree, SA- Strongly Agree

Brand Loyalty and Green Marketing

SN	Statement	SD-1	D-2	N-3	A-4	SA-5
11	I am loyal to brands that are environmentally responsible.					
12	I trust Nepali brands that promote sustainability more than international brands.					
13	I am more likely to buy from brands that support environmental causes.					
14	I recommend eco-friendly brands to my friends and family.					
15	I would switch to a new brand if it is more environmentally friendly.					

SD- Strongly Disagree, D- Disagree, N- Neutral, A- Agree, SA- Strongly Agree

Purchase Intentions and Green Marketing

SN	Statement	SD-1	D-2	N-3	A-4	SA-5
16	I plan to buy more eco-friendly products in the future.					
17	I look for eco-friendly labels (e.g., organic, biodegradable) when shopping.					
18	I consider the environmental impact of a product before buying it.					
19	I am influenced by advertisements that highlight a product's environmental benefits.					
20	I prefer buying from companies that are committed to sustainability.					

SD- Strongly Disagree, D- Disagree, N- Neutral, A- Agree, SA- Strongly Agree

Perception of Green Marketing by Nepali Companies

SN	Statement	SD-1	D-2	N-3	A-4	SD-5
21	Dabur Nepal (e.g., Ayurvedic and natural products)					
22	Bhat-Bhateni Supermarket (e.g., eco-friendly initiatives)					
23	Chaudhary Group (CG) (e.g., Wai Wai's eco-friendly packaging)					
24	Sastodeal (e.g., promoting sustainable products)					
25	Other Nepali brands you are familiar with: _____					

SD- Strongly Disagree, D- Disagree, N- Neutral, A- Agree, SA- Strongly Agree