Moderation effect of Social Influence on Purchase Intention of Green Products

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ABSTRACT

In the face of mounting environmental concerns, climate change, and consumer awareness, the concept of green products has gained significant traction. Over a number of years the laureates, socialists, environmentalists and academicians are trying to disseminate knowledge about environmental awareness and sustainable practices. Due to priceless efforts of above mentioned stakeholders of environment the consumers and manufacturers have directed their attention toward environment friendly products or Green Products. These products, designed to minimize negative environmental impact and promote sustainable consumption, have influenced a shift in consumer behaviour worldwide.

From 2020 onward, social influence has emerged as an increasingly influential factor. Social norms, peer recommendations, influencer endorsements, and societal expectations contribute to shaping consumer attitudes toward sustainability. The integration of social media platforms has further amplified these influences, allowing consumers to observe, emulate, and validate green behaviours in real-time digital environments.

In this paper the researchers highlight the effect of social influence as a moderator on purchase intention of green products that have been used to fulfil daily needs. 257 questionnaires were distributed through online/offline mode and among them only 185 questionnaires were fit for data analysis. Further moderation analysis is applied to analyze data which revealed that the social Influence significantly moderates the relation of purchase intention and green products.

1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing urgency of environmental degradation has brought green consumerism to the forefront of academic and industry discourse. Among the many factors that shape consumers' green purchase intentions; **social influence** has emerged as a powerful determinant in recent years. Between 2020 and 2025, numerous studies have explored how social norms, peer pressure, digital engagement, and influencer culture affect consumers' decisions to purchase eco-friendly products. Zhuang et al. (2020) conducted a meta-analysis revealing that **subjective norms** i.e. what individuals perceive others expect of them significantly predict green purchase intention, highlighting the social underpinnings of sustainable behavior. Wijekoon and Sabri (2021) extended this view by integrating **green trust** and **social influence** into a conceptual framework, arguing that trust in peers and social systems enhances intention to buy green products. Tao et al. (2022) examined **CSR communication** and noted that socially responsible behavior by companies positively shapes public opinion and purchase intention, especially when reinforced through social dialogue and peer endorsements.

In resultant, firms and consumers are becoming more sensitive to adopt green products. laroche et al. (2001); Paul and Rana, (2012); Lam and Mukherjee (2005); Gan et al. (2008) reported that there are various studies have examined the relationship between green products and purchase intention. According to Nimse et al. (2007) the environmental issues exert force on consumers to think about the products they are consuming and (Delre et al. (2010) found that the social influence is a key force which can alter and activate the consumer's emotions. Societal awareness to protect the environment through the consumption of environmental friendly products is spread by various parties like government, public figures and religious leaders. Barnett & Casper (2001) reported that the appeals from such entities can foster consumers' social consideration and that social influences can shape an individual's perception about something. In this paper the researchers highlight the effect of social influence (family, friends and relatives) as a moderator between purchase intention and green products that have been used to fulfil daily needs. 250 questionnaires were distributed among the respondents through online/offline mode and moderated linear regression analysis has been used to analyze the data.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of *purchase intention toward green products* has garnered increasing scholarly attention over the past decade, reflecting consumers' growing concern for environmental sustainability. Early foundational studies, such as that by Joshi and Rahman (2015), underscored the role of environmental knowledge and trust in green product claims as primary antecedents of green purchase behavior. They argued that a lack of information, skepticism, and perceived high cost were major barriers to green purchasing. Building on this, Suki (2016) explored the Malaysian context and found that consumers' green brand knowledge and environmental attitudes had a strong positive influence on purchase intentions, emphasizing the importance of targeted green marketing. The trend continued into 2017 with Taufique and Vaithianathan, who confirmed that environmental concern and social norms were key drivers of purchase intention in the Indian market, suggesting that cultural context and peer influence played significant roles in shaping eco-friendly behaviors.

In 2018, Jaiswal and Kant examined Indian consumers further, presenting a model where perceived product value and corporate social responsibility (CSR) strengthened consumers' green purchase intentions (Jaiswal & Kant, 2018). The relevance of CSR was echoed by Wu and Chen (2019), who incorporated the Theory of Planned Behavior and found that perceived behavioral control and environmental concern were essential in shaping behavioral intention. That same year, Choi and Lee (2019) emphasized the role of social media as a catalyst for enhancing environmental knowledge, indirectly increasing green product purchase intentions. Their study highlighted the emergence of digital platforms as critical tools for shaping sustainable consumption habits.

Zhuang et al. (2020) conducted a meta-analysis that confirmed the consistent positive influence of attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control on green purchase intentions. These findings were supported by Wijekoon and Sabri (2021), who proposed a conceptual framework integrating green trust and environmental concern, identifying them as major factors driving green consumerism. The evolution of consumer perception toward health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic further influenced green purchasing, as seen in Tao et al. (2022), who found that health consciousness and perceived safety bolstered intentions to buy organic and eco-friendly goods.

The discourse shifted toward digital influence by 2023, with Gupta et al. (2023) identifying digital awareness, health orientation, and peer influence as important triggers for green purchases in urban India. Iqbal et al. (2023) revealed that environmental knowledge moderated the effect of green marketing on purchase intention, reinforcing that informed consumers are more responsive to sustainability messages. In 2024, Royani and Imaningsih (2024) showed that brand reputation and product quality were critical in the eco-friendly skincare sector, while Garg et al. (2024) pointed to trust and social innovativeness as crucial for organic food purchases. Most recently, Brahma and Debnath (2025) concluded that environmental concern and promotional strategies remain the strongest predictors of green purchase intention, and a separate study on Generation Z (2025) found that perceived innovativeness significantly influences their purchasing decisions.

Social Influence and Purchase Intention

Wang, X., & Zhang, Y. (2024) investigates the impact of para-social interactions (PSIs) in live-streaming e-commerce on consumers' green product purchase intentions. The findings reveal that the interaction between green product message and benefit appeals significantly influences purchase intentions. Additionally, PSIs moderate the effects of message framing and benefit appeals, highlighting the importance of streamer traits in shaping consumer behavior in live-streaming contexts.

Sharma, L., Trivedi, M., Bagdi, H., & Bulsara, H. P. (2024) examines the role of product availability and social media in influencing green food product purchase intentions using the TPB(Theory of Planned Behavior) framework. The study finds that attitude and perceived behavioral control impact purchase intentions, while subjective norms were not supportive. Product availability influences perceived behavioral control, and social media positively impacts key constructs of the theory, suggesting that marketers should focus on enhancing product availability and leveraging social media to promote green food products.

Al Aflak, A., & Vij, P. (2024) examines how social media and moral obligations influence consumers' intentions to purchase green products. Findings indicate that electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and moral obligations positively impact attitudes and intentions toward green purchases. The study emphasizes the role of social media in shaping consumer behavior and

suggests that marketers can enhance green purchase intentions by leveraging social media platforms to communicate moral obligations and environmental benefits.

Persaud & Schillo (2017) found that social influence is significantly associated with higher buying intention of late adopters. According to Butcher et al. (2002) the social interactions between customers and employees can play significant role for business success. The study disclosed that social influence exhibits equal important as customer satisfaction and value perception for monetary factor have. Achchuthan and Thirunavukkarasu (2016) conducted a research and found that social influence has a significant effect on the buying intention of green products however a study was carried out by Wang (2014) and depicted that social influence does not have significant effect on green product purchase intention.

Purchase Intention

Intention is the strength of mind to operate in a defined manner. Ajzen (1991) in his seminal work of Theory of Planned behaviour (TPB) states that intention plays a crucial role to control the motivational factors that contribute to an actual behaviour. According to *Arslan and Zaman* (2014) Purchase intention can be defined as a possibility that a consumer will intend to purchase a product in future. Diallo (2012) found that the intention is a relevant dimension in marketing literature used by the companies to not only predict sales of new products but also predict purchase and repurchase of existing products. In other words, Intention is the readiness of consumers which ascertain the inclination towards green products over traditional non-green products during purchase decisions making. *Yusof* et al. (*2013*) reported that purchase intention for green products is framed as the probability and willingness to prefer the purchase of products that have eco-friendly features. It is found that a person with positive intention to buy green products show higher actual buying rate than the people who have low or no intention of buying green products. Royani, I., & Imaningsih, E. S. (2024) investigates the factors influencing consumers' intentions to purchase eco-friendly skincare products. It identifies product quality, brand reputation, and environmental consciousness as significant determinants of purchase intention in the skincare industry. Garg, S., Narwal, K.P., & Kumar, S. (2024) explores the drivers of organic food purchase intentions among Indian consumers. It finds that health consciousness, trustworthiness, and social innovativeness are vital predictors of purchase intention, with health aspects being the most influential factor. Jaiswal, D., & Kant, R. (2018) explores the impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on green purchase behavior among Indian consumers. It finds that CSR initiatives enhance consumer trust, which in turn positively influences green purchase intentions, emphasizing the importance of ethical business practices. Taufique, K. M. R., & Vaithianathan, S. (2017) investigates the role of environmental concern and social influence on consumers' intentions to purchase green products in India. The study finds that both environmental concern and social influence positively affect purchase intentions, suggesting that social norms play a crucial role in promoting sustainable consumption. *Suki, N. (2016),* examines how green brand positioning, consumer attitudes, and green brand knowledge influence green product purchase intentions. It finds that green brand knowledge significantly impacts consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions, highlighting the importance of educating consumers about green brands.

Social influence

Social influence can be referred as the change in individual's attitude or behaviour through the influence of others. Rashotte (2007) stated that the change in an individual's thoughts, feelings, attitudes or behaviours due to interaction with other individuals or groups. Klobas and Clyde (2001) explained that a group consists of friends, family-members, educators, employers, professionals, colleagues and experts meanwhile Maram and Kongsompong (2007) suggested that it consists of friends, family-members, associates, salespeople and even strangers. A study conducted by Bartels & Onwezen, (2014) revealed that individual's relationship with a social group is important to identify purchasing behaviour. Ohman (2011) indicated that socially desirable acts such as buying green products were motivated by social norms. The author point out that the increasing the social pressure can convert the intention into actual behaviour. In addition Bertrandias & Elgaaied-Gambier (2014) reported that when concern towards the environment becomes a social norm it has a strong influence on individuals' choices.

Green Product

Dahl & Persson (2008) found that in business world the terms green product and environmental product used interchangeably which incurs less harm to the environment. According to Kumar and Ghodeswar (2015) green products manufactured by using toxic-free ingredients with environment friendly measures and certified by an acknowledged organisation. Ottman et al. (2006) reported that green products also help in efficient use of resources and energy with reduction in omission of poisonous wastes. Along with that recyclability, durability, biodegradability, renewability and energy efficiency are other characteristics of the green products in comparison of non-green products. According to Fan and Zeng (2011) Green product is the centre idea of green marketing mix which involves other allied elements of the product such as raw materials, production process and packaging of the product.

Research Problem and Conceptual Framework

The review of the existing literature shows that there are many variables like ecological concern, quality consciousness, resource conservation consciousness, green 4Ps have significant effect on consumer purchase intention (PI). In this study the researchers want to explore the effect of social influence as a moderator between green product and purchase intention. So

the study will investigate the impact of social influence as a moderator on consumer purchase intention of green product. Researchers have developed the following hypothesis and conceptual framework to know the moderating effect of social influence on purchase intention of green products:

H_1: *Social Influence moderates the relation between Green Product and Purchase Intention.*
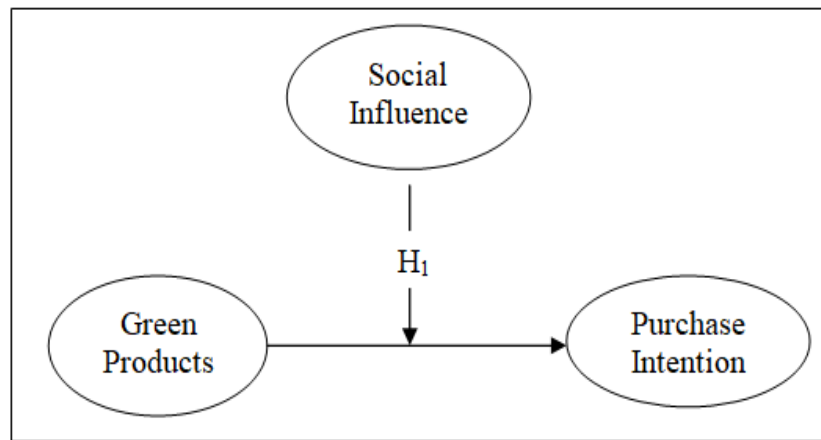

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

(Source: Researcher's study)

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is descriptive as well as cross sectional survey in nature. Primary data has been collected through online mode (Google Form) and offline mode with the help of questionnaire. 257 questionnaires were distributed among the respondents and 185 questionnaires were found to fit for data analysis. The items of the variables in the questionnaire has been adopted with 5-point Likert scale where"1" represents "strongly disagree" and "5" represents "strongly agree". The judgemental sampling has been adopted and the respondents were belonging to different location of Kanpur who prefers green products. The statistical software SPSS 21 has been used to run moderated linear regression analysis for empirical testing of the research hypothesis.

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents

Demographic variable	Categories	Respondents (in numbers)	Respondents (in percentage)
Gender	Male	96	51.9
	Female	89	48.1
Age	18-24	12	6.5
	25-34	66	35.7
	35-44	67	36.2
	45-54	26	14.1
	Above 54	14	7.6
Education	Higher Secondary	6	3.2
	Undergraduate	54	29.2
	Post-Graduate	114	61.6
	Others	11	5.9
Monthly income (in Rs.)	Upto 15,000	18	9.7
	15,001-25,000	10	5.4

	25,001-35,000	64	34.6
	35,001-45,000	70	37.8
	Above 45,000	23	12.4
Purchase frequency	1-5 times	48	25.9
	6-10 times	79	42.7
	More than 10 times	58	31.4

Source-Primary data

Table-1 depicts the demographic characteristics of respondents. The respondents were approximately equal in respect of gender (51.9% males and 48.1% females) and the maximum numbers of respondent were belonging to age group of 25-34 years (35.7%) and 35-44 years (36.2%). Majority of the respondents were post-graduate (61.6%) and 42.7% of the respondents were purchase green products 6-10 times in a month. 34.6% of the respondents were belong to income group of Rs.25, 001-35,000 and 37.8% found in the group of Rs. 35,001-45,000.

4. RESULTS

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis

	Mean	Std. Dev,	No. of items	Cronbach alpha
Green Product	12.35	2.035	3	0.804
Social Influence	11.14	2.425	3	0.885
Purchase Intention	15.47	2.511	4	0.887

In this model, green product is an independent variables and purchase intention is dependent variable while social influence considered as a moderator. According to Hair et al. (2010) Cronbach's alpha measures the internal consistency of items of a variable and value of that measure could be at least 0.70, although it may decrease to 0.60. In Table-2 the Cronbach's alpha of Green Product, Social Influence and Purchase Intention are 0.804, 0.885 and 0.887 respectively.

Table 3: Correlation between Independent Variable, Dependent Variable and Moderator

	Green Product	Social Influence
Purchase Intention	.596	.401
Significance Level	.000	.000

Correlation Table: 3 reveals a significant positive correlation between green product (0.596, $p<0.05$) and Social Influence (0.401, $p<0.05$) with purchase intention.

Table 4: Moderation of Social Influence between Green Product and Purchase Intention

Variable	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	Std. Error	β	B	Std. Error	β
Constant	15.47	0.14		15.60	0.15	
GP	1.30	0.15	0.52	1.09	0.16	0.44
SI	.57	0.15	0.23	0.48	0.15	0.19
GP*SI				-0.39	0.11	-0.22
R^2	0.40			0.44		
ΔR^2				0.04		

Note: GP= Green Product, SI= Social Influence, Level of Significance p<0.05.

Table: 4 show the moderation of Social Influence between Green Product and Purchase Intention. In Model 1 the R^2 value of 0.40 revealed that the predictor explained 40 percent variance in the outcome with $F_{(2, 182)} = 60.77$, p<0.05. The finding revealed that Green Product (*ß=0.52*, p<0.05) and Social Influence (*ß=0.23*, p<0.05) positively predict Purchase Intention. In model 2 the R^2 value of 0.44 revealed that the predictor explained 44 percent variance in the outcome with $F_{(3, 181)} = 46.92$, p<0.05. The finding revealed that Green Product (*ß=0.44*, p<0.05), Social Influence (*ß=0.19*, p<0.05) and Green Product* Social Influence (*ß=-0.22*, p<0.05) positively predict Purchase Intention. The ΔR^2 value of 0.04 revealed that 4 percent change in the variance of Model 1 and Model 2 with $\Delta F_{(1, 181)} = 11.93$, p<0.05. Finding shows that Social Influence moderated the relation between Green Product and Purchase Intention.

5. DISCUSSION

This study examines the effect of social influence on consumer purchase intention of green products through moderated linear regression analysis. Result shows that the moderator of social influence positively correlated and significantly affects the relation between green product and purchase intention. It means that the consumers also consider the thoughts and conversations of their family members, friends and relatives while making purchase decision of green products. So this study reveals that consumers have significantly influence by their family members, friends and relatives to adopt green products in their consumption patterns.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Implications of the Study

The findings of the study offer academic contributions to the prevalent body of knowledge on consumer behaviour by delivering valuable understanding of the effect of social influence as a moderator between consumer purchase intention and green product. So the firms can develop their promotional strategies with due consideration of social influence as a moderator.

Limitations and Future Recommendations of the Study

There are few key limitations of the study that can be taken into account and could be used as future research opportunities. First the study was constricted to limited location of Kanpur and secondly this study has considered a moderator of social influence only. So the future research could be conduct with relatively large geographical area along with other demographic variables such as age, gender, education and income as serial or parallel moderators that could provide some other important empirical results for decision makers. The R^2 value for model 1 and model 2 is 40% and 44% respectively in terms of green product purchase intention which depicts that there are some other moderating variables that can be researched to predict the consumers' intention to buy green products.

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