



Attitude towards Green Brands and Green Purchase Intention: Moderating Role of Willingness to Pay Premium among Consumers in Kathmandu Valley

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Article Info.	Abstract
<p>Corresponding Author Rajak Bishowkarma</p> <p>Email rajakbishowkarma7@gmail.com</p> <p>Article History Received: 19 May 2024 First Revised: 05 June, 2024 Second Revised: 11 June, 2024 Accepted: 20 June 2024</p> <p>Cite Bishowkarma, R., & Lohala, R. (2024). Attitude towards green brands and green purchase intention: moderating role of willingness to pay premium among consumers in Kathmandu valley. <i>SAIM Journal of Social Science and Technology</i>, 1(1), 41–52. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13577293</p>	<p>Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine the moderating role of willingness to pay premium (WPPP) to attitude towards green brands (ATGB) and green purchase intention (GPI).</p> <p>Research Methods: This study applied a quantitative research method, employing a cross-sectional survey with purposive sampling to gather data from 254 environmentally conscious consumers in Kathmandu Valley. Data analysis was performed by employing Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).</p> <p>Finding: The findings indicate that ATGB and WTPP significantly and positively impact GPI. However, the result found that WTPP does not significantly moderate the relation between ATGB and GPI.</p> <p>Practical implications: This study could help managers to better understand consumer intention towards green brands and to develop effective marketing strategies that target consumers.</p> <p>Originality: This paper is one of the first studies to explain moderating role of willingness of pay premium in relationship between attitude towards green brands and purchase intention by applying the ST and TPB in the Nepali context.</p> <p>Keywords: Attitude towards green brands, green purchase intention, structural equation modelling, willingness to pay premium</p>

Introduction

Global warming and environmental pollution have spurred corporations to produce eco-friendly green products, with environmental concerns now at the forefront of organizational agendas (Sugandini et al., 2018). Both companies and consumers prioritize environmental protection, leading to a shift towards green production and consumption habits (Sreen et al., 2018). Customers increasingly

value environmental issues, prompting companies to adopt sustainable practices (Verma et al., 2019). As awareness of environmental protection grows, consumers integrate sustainability into their daily lives, including food choices (Lu & Chi, 2018). Government regulations such as the E-Waste Rules of 2018 and consumer demand for environmental responsibility push businesses to adopt sustainable practices swiftly (Nguyen et al., 2018; Wang, 2017).



Scholars assert that consumers with knowledge about green products are more inclined to use and purchase them (Alam et al., 2019; Lai and Cheng, 2016). Thus, it is essential to investigate green purchase behaviors among green consumers.

GPI, a significant predictor of green purchase behavior, is also important in promoting sustainable/ green behavior. GPI refers to the desire of a customer to purchase green brands that meet their needs (Aulina & Yuliati, 2017). Furthermore, Dahai et al. (2022) documented that customers that have a positive perception of green products may be more interested in green purchasing intentions. Mamun et al., (2018) found that green purchase behavior is significantly predicted by intentions to acquire green products. Likewise, ATGB and WTPP are an important variables that significantly influences consumers' GPI which emphasizes the significance of businesses' efforts to establish and promote green brands in the marketplace. ATGB is defined as an individual's willingness to participate in pro-environmental actions and respond positively to green marketing strategies (Sheng et al., 2019). Research has shown that consumers' knowledge of environmentally friendly brands and products is associated positively with their attitude towards these brands (Grimmer et al., 2014). The concept of WTPP denotes a willingness to pay more for a certain service brand than for comparable alternatives (Casidy & Wymer, 2016). According to Mamun et al., (2018), the willingness to pay for green products can be considered a form of intention to purchase environmentally friendly items. One of the key driving factors for organization to implement eco-friendliness for their products and services is consumers' willingness to pay for green products which implies that WTPP can influence purchase intention. Despite the existing literatures, the moderating role of WTPP has remained understudied in relation between ATGPB and GPI. Thus, it is reasonable to investigate the moderating role WTPP in relationship between ATGB and GPI.

In Nepali context, research on green purchase intention are limited. First, previous studies focused

on green marketing, organic green food products, and perception of green products, green brand positioning, and attitudes towards green brands (Gautam & Pokhrel, 2023; Thakur, 2023). Second, Adhikari and Dangol (2019) discovered limited availability of environmentally friendly products in Nepal due to high prices and accessibility barriers. Third, despite the growing global concern for environmental protection, the consumption of green products in Nepal remains unsatisfactory (Sedhai & Khatri, 2023). Moreover, the market for eco-friendly products in Nepal has yet to achieve mainstream status (Ghimire, 2020). Due to the need of investigating green concern in Nepali context and research gaps in investigating moderating role of WTPP in relationship between ATGB and GPI. Drawing from the theory of planned behavior and signaling theory of WTPP in relation between ATGB and GPI among Nepali green consumers in Kathmandu Valley. This study offers valuable insights for managers to grasp consumer intentions towards green brands and craft effective marketing strategies.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Relationship Between Variables

Attitude towards Green brands (ATGB) and Green Purchase Intention (GPI)

The concept of ATGB has been defined by many scholars and researchers over the years. In general, an individual's attitude is a psychological process that decides whether they are in favor of or against a particular object (Eagly & Chaiken, 2007). On the other hand, GPI is defined as a person's willingness to choose environmentally friendly products over conventional ones as a way to show that they care about the environment (Chaudhary, 2018). The theoretical logic for the relationship between ATGB and GPI can be explained by TPB propounded by Ajzen (1991). TPB is a well-established theory of consumer behavior that helps predict and explain specific consumer behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). This theory states that intention of individual to purchase green brand is influenced by their ATGB, subjective norms, and

perceived behavioral control. In different services contexts, several researchers have applied TPB in the relationship between ATGB and GPI (Batool et al., 2023; Chaudhary & Bisai, 2018; Duong et al., 2022). Several researchers have found positive relationship between ATGB and GPI (Amoako et al., 2020; Dahai et al., 2022; Situmorang et al., 2021). The results of studies on the green market has shown that consumer attitudes towards environmentally friendly behavior significantly impact their intention to buy eco-friendly products. This paper argues that consumers' positive ATGB significantly enhance their likelihood of GPI. Based on theoretical and empirical ground, this paper formulates hypotheses:

Hypothesis (H1): ATGB positively influences GPI.

Attitude towards green brands (ATGB) and Green Purchase Intention (GPI): Moderating Role of Willingness Pay Premium (WTPP)

Willingness to pay refers to the highest price at or below which a customer will definitely purchase one unit of a product. The concept of WTPP denotes a willingness to pay more for a certain service brand than for comparable alternatives (Casidy & Wymer, 2016). This definition specifies the importance of brands and present of substitute to pay a premium. TPB explains the relationship between WTPP and GPI by highlighting how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991). It has been an effective tool for understanding factors affecting consumers' purchase intentions. Many researchers (Bhutto et al., 2021; Chaudhary, 2018) have found

a positive relationship between WTPP and GPI, indicating that consumers willing to pay more for green products are more likely to intend to purchase them. This paper argues that consumers' WTPP significantly influence GPI. Based on theoretical and empirical ground, this paper formulates hypotheses:

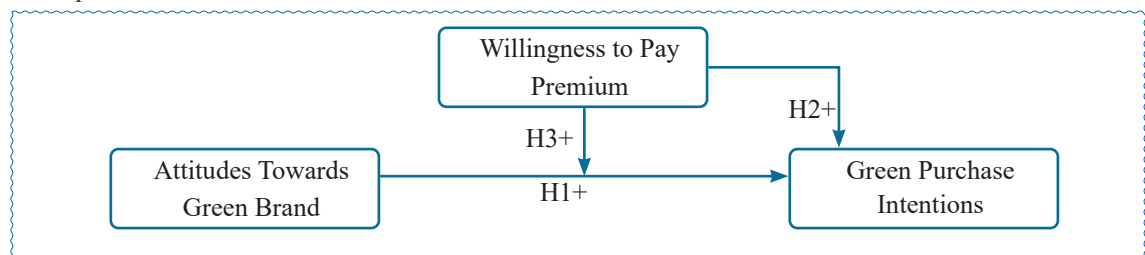
Hypothesis (H2): WTPP positively Influences GPI

The moderating role of WTPP in the relationship between ATGB and GPI is explained by Spence's signaling theory (1973), which suggests that signals convey information about characteristics, attributes, and intentions. Effective signals reduce information asymmetry, build trust, and align with consumer values, influencing purchasing behavior. Mehraj & Qureshi (2022) found that WTPP considerably moderates the relationship between ATGB and GPI. This indicate that when consumers have a high WTPP, their purchase intention (GPI) based on their positive attitude towards green behavior (ATGB) is stronger. This is because their WTPP serves as a reliable indicator of their commitment to green behavior. However, in studies on green consumer behavior, varied results have been documented regarding the WTPP for environmentally friendly products (Kirmani & Khan, 2018; Shahsavar et al., 2020). Similarly, Farzin (2023) discovered that consumers were prepared to pay extra for environmentally friendly products. This study argues that when consumers have a WTPP, it moderates their GPI based on their positive ATGB. Based on the argument, the hypotheses was developed:

Hypothesis (H3): WTPP Moderates the Relationship between ATGB and GPI

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



Research Methods

Population and Sample

The respondents involved in the study were environmentally conscious customers from Kathmandu Valley. The respondents either have bought eco-friendly brands or products before or are familiar with at least a few eco-friendly brand names. Likewise, due to fast urban growth and a rising population, the Kathmandu Valley has become a heavily populated urban region. While pinpointing the exact location of environmentally conscious consumers is challenging, urban areas with better education and access to information likely to have more of them. Therefore, the selection of Kathmandu Valley as a site was a rational decision. Due to the unavailability of a database for environmentally conscious consumers, researchers utilized a purposive sampling method to gather information from the participants. This paper argues that the purposive sampling technique is the most reasonable for selecting a sample from the population with inclusion criteria (Pokhrel & K.C., 2023). Finally, Based on Hair et al.'s (2016) recommendation, the sample size could vary from 185 to 370, the sample size for this study is determined at 254. Given the homogeneity of the population of green product users, the researchers presumed that this sample size would adequately reflect the population. The argument for sample size is aligned with previous studies (Pokhrel & K.C., 2023; Yadav & Pokhrel, 2023).

Measures

To measure attitude towards green brand and green purchase intention moderating role of willingness to pay premium, this paper used three measures with 12 items. The surveys utilized a 5-point Likert scale spanning from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). The researcher employed adapted questionnaires from various sources to measure different constructs. The measurement of ATGB consists of five items adapted from the research conducted by Chaudhary and Bisai (2018). A sample item included: 'I believe that green brands/products

are environmentally friendly'. To measure WTPP, the researcher adapted questionnaire Chaudhary and Bisai (2018) with three items documented. A sample item included: 'I would pay more for a green product that is making efforts to be environmentally sustainable'. GPI is measured using a four-item scale adapted questionnaire from Mohd Suki (2016). A sample item included: 'I will consider buying any green brands' product out of concern for the environment'.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected in the form of printed and digital questionnaire from 2022 December to 2023 January. The respondents were briefed about the objective and confidentiality of collected data. From 300 questionnaires distributed, 280 were returned, and 254 of these were used for analysis.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile

Demographic variables including age, gender, occupation, and education were examined to understand the characteristics of the 254 person sample. The majority of respondents in this study were male (n=140, 55.1%). The majority of respondents were from age group of 20-30 (n=213, 83.9%). Most of the respondents have completed their bachelor level (n=172, 67.7%). Other respondents who have completed Bachelor level are more than half of the total respondents. Finally, the majority of respondents have a monthly income exceeding 50,000 (n=117, 46.1%).

Common Method Biases

To address method variance, this paper used surveys authored by different individuals. After collecting data, the traditional Herman single factor technique was applied, and found un-rotated single factor showed 35.27%. With Herman's single-factor test yielding a value below 50%, method variance is unlikely to affect the structural model results (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Thus, researchers can conclude no common method biases in the dataset.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is commonly utilized to investigate causal relationships among latent constructs (Hair et al., 2016). There are two main approaches to SEM: covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) and variance-based structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). In this paper, CB-SEM was utilized to assess both the measurement and structural models, aligning with the approach used in a previous study by Pokhrel et al. (2022).

Measurement Model

Researchers used reliability and validity techniques to estimate the measurement model (Bido et al., 2014). Both Cronbach Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR) values surpassed the threshold of 0.744, confirming reliability (Hair et al., 2011). Convergent validity was evaluated using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), ranging from 0.535 to 0.670 across constructs, which surpasses the recommended threshold of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). However, factors with low loadings (ATGB and GPI) were excluded from the model (see Table 1).

Table 1

Reliability and Validity of Model

Constructs	Indicators	Loadings	AVE	CR (rho_a)	CR (rho_c)	Alpha
Attitude Towards Green Brand	ATGB1	0.896	0.627	0.745	0.886	0.744
	ATGB2	0.888				
Green Purchase Intention	GPI2	0.849				
	GPI3	0.784	0.624	0.736	0.832	0.704
	GPI4	0.732				
Willingness to Pay Premium	WTPP1	0.796				
	WTPP2	0.792	0.662	0.749	0.854	0.744
	WTPP3	0.851				

Note. Based on authors' calculation

Discriminant Validity

Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criteria and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) were employed to assess discriminant validity. This criterion confirms validity when the square root of a construct's AVE exceeds its correlation with

all other constructs. The study found that the square roots of AVEs were higher compared to correlations with other constructs, meeting Fornell and Larcker's criteria. However, the HTMT values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.90 according to Teo et al. (2008).

Table 2

Discriminant Validity (Fornell and Larcker's Criterion and HTMT Ratios)

Constructs	2	2	3
1. Attitude towards Green Brands	0.892	0.631	0.317
2. Green Purchase Intention	0.463	0.790	0.548
3. Willingness to Pay Premium	0.233	0.421	0.813

Note. Based on authors' calculation; ATGB: Attitude towards Green Brand; WTPP: Willingness to Pay Premium; GPI: Green Purchase Intention; the values below the diagonal represent Fornell and Larcker's criteria, while those above represent HTMT ratios.

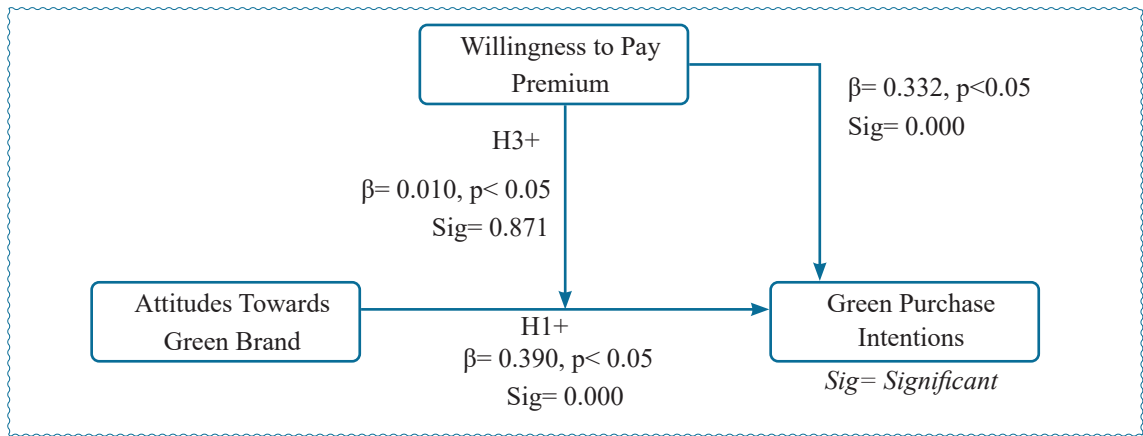
Structural Model

Before estimating the stated hypotheses using the structural model, this study assessed an assessment of multicollinearity assumptions. The

assessment demonstrated that all Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values remained under 5, showing that multicollinearity is not a problem (Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, the structural model was estimated.

Figure 2

Structural Model



First, H1 investigates whether ATGB positively affect green purchase intentions. The findings indicated that ATGB significantly influence GPI ($\beta = 0.390, p < 0.05$). Therefore, H1 is supported. Second, H2 investigates whether WTPP positively influences GPI. The result shows that WTPP significantly influences GPI ($\beta = 0.332, p < 0.05$). Therefore, H2 was supported. Finally,

the paper evaluated the moderating effect of WTPP on the relationship between ATGB and GPI. The results indicated a significant negative moderating effect of WTPP on the relationship between ATGB and GPI ($\beta = 0.010, t = 0.163, p < 0.05$) not supporting H3. The Table 3 presents a summary of the moderation analysis.

Table 3

Results of Structural Model

Hypotheses	Standardized Beta (β)	T statistics	P values	Decision
H1. ATGB -> GPI	0.390	6.473	0.000	Supported
H2. WTPP-> GPI	0.332	5.640	0.000	Supported
H3. WTPP*ATGB -> GPI	0.010	0.163	0.871	Unsupported

Note. Based on authors' calculation; ATGB: Attitude towards Green Brand; WTPP: Willingness to Pay Premium; GPI: Green Purchase Intention

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the moderating role of WTPP on ATGB and GPI. The results of the study concluded that WTPP does not significantly moderate the relationship between ATGB and GPI.

First, the study examined the relationship between ATGB and GPI. It discovered a significant influence of ATGB on GPI, indicating that as consumers develop more positive attitudes towards green brands, their intentions to purchase these

products also increase. This finding aligns with previous studies (Batool et al., 2023; Chaudhary & Bisai, 2018; Duong et al., 2022), which support the idea that positive attitudes toward environmentally friendly products lead to a greater inclination to purchase them. This result is consistent with the theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (1991), which suggests that attitudes toward a behavior, along with subjective norms and perceived behavioral control, influence behavioral intentions. The study concluded that a positive attitude towards green brands contributes to the intention to purchase

these products. Therefore, companies should enhance their customers' green brand associations and attitudes, as this approach can effectively boost their customers' willingness to purchase green products.

Furthermore, the significant impact of WTPP on GPI in this study is consistent with previous research (Bhutto et al., 2021; Chaudhary, 2018; Prakash & Pathak, 2017). It suggests that the amount consumers are willing to pay extra for environmentally friendly products directly influences their intention to choose such products. This finding is closely related to the argument of the theory of planned behavior, as it reflects the influence of perceived behavioral control. According to the theory, individuals are more likely to engage in a behavior if they perceive that they have control over it. This study concludes consumers' WTPP for green brands demonstrates their perceived control over their purchasing decisions and their commitment to environmental values. Second, the study investigated the moderating role of WTPP on ATGB and GPI. However, contrary to previous findings (Farzin, 2023; Mehraj & Qureshi, 2022), this study found that WTPP did not positively influence this relationship. The results suggest that the relationship was weaker for consumers who were willing to pay a premium for green brands. This implies that consumers who have a positive attitude towards green product consumption are deterred by the willingness to pay a premium for eco-friendly products. This paper attempted to explain the result using signaling theory and the theory of planned behavior. The initiation of an attitude towards a green brand sends a signal to consumers, which helps to change the moderating role of WTPP in the relationship between ATGB and GPI. Furthermore, there is currently significant pressure from policymakers and society regarding sustainability issues (Lopes et al., 2022; Nogueira et al., 2022). As a result, consumers may feel compelled to purchase greener products, altering their consumption habits. Moreover, Martin et al., (2007) noted that customers are inclined to pay

more or accept higher prices if they are satisfied with the service. Hence, it is essential for the company to not only disclose the price but also explain the reasoning behind it.

Conclusion

The pressure to consume green products is becoming increasingly noticeable in our daily lives. However, recent financial crises and the pandemic have heightened consumers' value consciousness. The results of the study concluded that WTPP does not significantly moderate the relationship between ATGB and GPI. Therefore, this result found that WTPP for green products is not a significant factor that influences the relationship between their ATGB and their intention to purchase those brands. This study also shows that consumers in Nepal are unwilling to pay a higher price or premium for environmentally friendly products, even if they have positive attitudes towards green brands and intentions to purchase green products. However, the various pressures are driving us towards increased green product consumption, which is vital for achieving sustainability goals. To encourage customers to alter their consumption behavior, the willingness to pay extra for green products must be justified and motivated. Politicians and marketers have a crucial role to play in this effort.

Implications for the Study

Managerial Implications

It is expected that this study will provide marketers and managers with insightful information. First, the findings of this study suggest that the companies' ATGB regarded as a crucial component in GPI, managers should invest in strengthening positive associations with their green brands. Therefore, companies should communicate to consumers that they are essential in fostering a sustainable business environment amidst intense competition. Second, this study indicates that consumers WTPP for environmentally friendly products are more likely to intend to purchase these products. Businesses can capitalize on this by positioning their green products as premium

offerings, emphasizing their unique environmental benefits and quality. Furthermore, introducing tiered pricing strategies, where higher-priced options include additional environmental benefits or certifications, can appeal to consumers with a high WTPP, thereby increasing overall sales and market share. Third, this study further suggests that companies' efforts should be directed towards reinforcing the perceived benefits derived from green products, which may increase WTPP for the green brands/products and must have a strong brand identity which may be done by highlighting the benefits of green their brands and their commitment to reduce environmental impact.

Limitations and Direction for Future Research

Although this study has produced a number of insightful insights, it is crucial to exercise caution when interpreting the results. First, this study employed a cross-sectional survey approach to accomplish its research objectives. As a result, this study is correlational, and longitudinal research would be useful to look at how customers' opinions and behavioral intentions evolve over time. Second, the results of this study are specific to consumers in Nepal. Future research could explore whether these results hold true in other significant emerging markets. Third, this study investigated the moderating role of WTPP on ATGB and GPI. Future studies should consider other moderating factors such as perceived environmental benefits, product availability, convenience, and product quality to promote different groups' WTPP prices for eco-friendly brands. Fourth, the preceding part deliberated on the implications for marketers, taking into account the findings. However, there is no empirical evidence to support the efficacy of these implications. Consequently, in order to confirm the efficacy of the marketing techniques suggested in the current study, future researchers should utilize it as a baseline and conduct additional research.

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