

Investigating Green Purchase Decision of SMEs in Development Countries: A Literature Review

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This study investigates factors influencing green product purchasing by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries, focusing on the theory of consumption values (TCV) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB). Using a systematic literature review, articles published between 2020 and 2024 were analyzed. Findings show that TCV is crucial for understanding green purchasing behavior through functional, social, emotional, and epistemic values, significantly impacting consumer intentions. Consumers prefer products that meet functional needs and align with their values. TPB highlights attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control in shaping purchase intentions. Positive environmental attitudes, social support, and perceived control encourage green product purchasing. Integrating TCV and TPB offers a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics influencing these decisions. Practically, this study guides marketers in developing effective green marketing strategies by highlighting product benefits and leveraging community support. Although focused on recent literature and TCV and TPB, further research could explore other factors influencing green purchasing in different contexts. This study enriches the literature on green purchasing and supports sustainable economic growth for SMEs in developing countries.

Keywords: Developing Countries; Green Product Purchasing; SMEs; Theory of Consumption Values; Theory of Planned Behavior

INTRODUCTION

Purchasing green products by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries is not only crucial for environmental sustainability but also has significant economic implications (Mishaal & Haw, 2023). Developing countries face major challenges in reducing environmental impact while still promoting economic growth. Currently, SMEs, as the backbone of the economy in many developing countries, play a key role in the transition towards more sustainable business practices (Karuppiah et al., 2020). However, with increasing pressure from environmentally conscious global consumers and stricter regulatory requirements, there is an urgent need to understand and address the factors influencing green product purchasing decisions by SMEs (Mishra & Kulshreshtha, 2023). Addressing these challenges will not only help reduce the carbon footprint and negative environmental impacts but also open new market opportunities and enhance the competitiveness of SMEs in an increasingly green global market.

Several theories explain green purchase decisions, such as the theory of reasoned action (TRA), theory of planned behavior (TPB), theory of consumption values (TCV), marketing mix, and social cognitive theory. However, recent studies have focused more on the use of TPB and TCV (Sharma et al., 2023; Tanrikulu, 2021). TPB emphasizes the importance of intentions and decisions influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, all of which play a role in guiding consumer decisions to purchase green products (Zhang & Dong, 2020). TCV provides insights into consumer consumption behavior through the consumption values that influence consumer choices towards various products and services, including green products (Bahoo et al., 2024).

The purpose of this research is to comprehensively examine the factors influencing the purchase of green products by SMEs in developing countries through a literature review. Research on the green purchase decisions by SMEs in developing countries based on the TPB and TCV theories is essential due to the limited previous studies that have not comprehensively addressed the psychological factors (such as TPB) and consumption values (such as TCV) influencing consumers' green purchasing decisions. Specifically, this study aims to identify the key drivers that motivate consumers to make green purchases from SME products by focusing on the TPB and TCV theories.

This research holds significant practical and theoretical implications. Practically, it is expected to help SMEs understand the key factors that drive consumers to purchase green products, enabling SMEs to develop more effective marketing strategies, enhance their competitiveness, and support sustainable economic growth. Theoretically, this research is also expected to enrich the literature on green purchasing behavior by offering a deeper understanding of how TPB and TCV theories can be applied to analyze green purchase decisions in developing countries. Thus, this study is anticipated to serve as a reference for future research in the fields of sustainability and consumer behavior.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Green Product Purchasing by SMEs in Developing Countries

Green product purchasing by SMEs in developing countries reflects an effort to integrate sustainability principles into business practices. This green product concept not only involves the use of environmentally friendly raw materials but also includes production processes that reduce waste and carbon emissions (Moshood et al., 2022). With increasing consumer awareness of environmental issues, SMEs that can offer green products can meet the growing market demand, thereby enhancing their competitiveness. According to data from UNEP (United Nations Environment

Programme), SMEs contribute about 60% to 70% of total employment in developing countries (United Nations, 2024). Although only a few SMEs are involved in green products (Purwandani & Michaud, 2021), the potential for growth in this sector is significant, especially if coupled with operational cost savings and access to broader markets. Unfortunately, the adoption of green products by SMEs in developing countries is not without challenges. Resource limitations, access to green technology, and higher production costs often hinder SMEs from transitioning to sustainable practices (Wang et al., 2023). Additionally, support from the government and non-governmental organizations is also a crucial factor influencing SMEs' ability to develop green products (Chen & Liu, 2020). Nevertheless, with increasing consumer awareness and supportive sustainability regulations, SMEs have the potential to innovate and adapt quickly.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

TPB was first introduced by Ajzen (1985) and further elaborated by Ajzen (1991), stating that a person's intention to perform a certain action is influenced by three main factors: attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. TPB assumes that intention is the closest predictor of behavior, depending on the extent to which a person has control over the action (Astuti & Solihin, 2024; Rozenkowska, 2023). Attitude is influenced by how positively or negatively the characteristics of action are evaluated, while subjective norms relate to social influences, that is, the opinions or views of people considered important by the individual (Kwon & Silva, 2019). Perceived behavioral control refers to the extent to which a person believes they have the resources and opportunities to perform an action, which in turn affects the likelihood of the individual carrying out the behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). In the context of green purchase behavior (GPB), the intention to buy green products is seen as the primary factor predicting the actual GPB (Kamalanon et al., 2022).

However, several limitations of TPB have also been identified, particularly regarding the relationship between attitude variables and environmental concern with green purchase intention (Zaremohzzabieh et al., 2021). Some studies, such as those proposed by Choi & Johnson (2019) and Joshi & Rahman (2015), suggest modifications to TPB to address these limitations, incorporating additional factors such as motivation and environmental factors. The GPB model, as adopted by Zaremohzzabieh et al. (2021) offers an alternative to explaining the gap between attitudes and consumer behavior toward green products. This model emphasizes motivational factors influencing green purchase intention and clarifies the reasons behind the discrepancies between pro-environmental attitudes and actual purchasing behavior of green products. This suggests that TPB still provides room for model development, especially in explaining consumer behavior toward green product purchases.

Theory of Consumption Value (TCV)

TCV was first introduced by Sheth et al. (1991). This theory provides a framework for understanding consumer behavior by categorizing it into five main consumption values: functional value, conditional value, emotional value, social value, and epistemic value. (Aravindan et al., 2023). The TCV seeks to forecast, describe, and elucidate consumer choice behavior by concentrating on the value-driven motivations behind consumption behavior (Bahoo et al., 2024). This theory combines insights from various fields including economics, marketing, consumer behavior, sociology, and psychology, offering a multidisciplinary perspective on consumer decision-making (Sheth et al., 1991). Each of the five consumption values helps explain why consumers choose to buy or not buy certain products, prefer one type of product over another, and choose one brand over another (Tanrikulu, 2021). For instance, functional value relates to product performance, whereas emotional value refers to the affective reactions of consumers towards the product or brand.

In marketing research, TCV has been extensively applied to analyze a variety of industries and products, including digital products, green products, and tourism, as highlighted by literature reviews conducted over the last 30 years (Bahoo et al., 2024). TCV is particularly pertinent for examining green product purchasing behavior as it accounts for both the practical and pleasurable aspects of the value perceived by consumers (Religia, Ridwan, et al., 2023). A study by Dong and Huang (2024) confirms that consumption values can be used as predictors of purchase intention, making it a suitable tool for understanding the consumption and purchase of environmentally friendly products. TCV also provides a multidimensional perspective that connects consumption behavior to consumer satisfaction by considering the perceived net utility post-purchase. Given the importance of consumption value, Religia, Ambarwati, et al. (2023) advises small retailers to focus on creating consumer value in their marketing strategies. This approach offers a more profound understanding of the motivations and decisions of consumers across different product and service contexts.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a systematic literature review method to analyze relevant research on green product purchasing decisions by SMEs in developing countries. This approach was selected to obtain a thorough understanding of the topic by reviewing findings from a range of prior studies. Data collection involved searching for scholarly articles published between 2020 and 2024 across multiple academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. Keywords used in the search included "green purchasing", "green purchase decision", "TPB", "TCV", "SMEs", and "developing countries." Only articles focusing on green product purchasing by SMEs in developing countries and using TPB or TCV as the main theoretical framework were included in the analysis.

After the search, articles that met the inclusion criteria were analyzed in-depth to identify key factors influencing green product purchasing decisions by SMEs. The analysis was conducted by grouping the articles based on research objectives, theories used, methods employed, and research findings. Data from the relevant articles were then synthesized and mapped into a literature review table to provide a holistic overview of existing research trends and identify research gaps that could be opportunities for further studies. This analytical technique is expected to yield clearer insights into the main drivers of green purchasing decisions by SMEs in developing countries and the role of TPB and TCV theories in explaining this behavior.

RESULTS

Based on the literature review conducted, it is found that the TCV provides an essential framework for understanding green product purchasing behavior by emphasizing various value dimensions that influence consumer intentions. Research indicates that functional value, social value, emotional value, and epistemic value positively contribute to the intention to buy environmentally friendly products (Joibi & Annuar, 2021; Rachman & Amarullah, 2024). In this context, consumption values encompass not only the functional aspects of the product but also how consumers associate the product with their social and emotional identities, which is increasingly important in sustainable product purchasing decisions.

In contrast, the TPB emphasizes the influence of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control as crucial elements in determining purchase intentions and actual buying behavior (Rahman et al., 2020; Yadav et al., 2022). Research utilizing TPB

indicates that a favorable environmental attitude, social support, and a strong sense of control over purchasing behavior can encourage consumers to act and buy green products. Therefore, TPB provides a comprehensive understanding of how both social and individual factors work together to impact purchasing decisions.

When comparing TCV and TPB, these two theories complement each other in explaining green purchasing decisions. TCV focuses on the inherent values of the product and how these values influence intention, while TPB emphasizes the factors influencing behavior within social and individual contexts. The integration of these two theories not only deepens the understanding of the dynamics influencing green purchasing decisions but also provides insights for marketers to design more effective and relevant strategies in the context of sustainability (Aliedan et al., 2023; Dilotsotlhe & Duh, 2021).

The methodology that can be employed to explain the roles of TCV and TPB in green purchasing decisions involves a quantitative survey approach using a Likert scale-based questionnaire. This method allows researchers to systematically measure the dimensions of consumption values and the factors of TPB (Dilotsotlhe & Duh, 2021; Rachman & Amarullah, 2024). Analysis using structural equation modeling techniques, such as Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), can assist in identifying relationships among variables and measuring the significant impact of consumption values and TPB factors on the intentions and behaviors related to green product purchasing (Mason et al., 2023; Susanty et al., 2021). This approach enables researchers to develop a comprehensive and relevant model that explains the factors influencing green purchasing decisions across various social and cultural contexts.

The findings of the research indicate that both the TCV and the TPB significantly contribute to understanding green purchasing decisions. In the context of TCV, studies reveal that consumption value dimensions, such as functional and emotional values, positively influence attitudes and intentions to buy environmentally friendly products. This suggests that consumers tend to prefer products that not only meet functional needs but also align with their personal values and identities (Pauluzzo & Mason, 2022; Rachman & Amarullah, 2024). On the other hand, research applying TPB emphasizes that a positive attitude towards green products, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control play crucial roles in shaping actual purchase intentions and behaviors. This indicates that social support and personal beliefs have a strong impact on consumer decision-making (Rahman et al., 2020; Yadav et al., 2022). Thus, the combination of these findings provides a clear picture of the complexity of factors influencing green purchasing decisions, underscoring the need for a multidimensional approach in designing effective marketing strategies for environmentally friendly products (Aliedan et al., 2023; Dilotsotlhe & Duh, 2021). A more comprehensive overview of the literature can be seen in Table 1.

Overall, this body of research emphasizes the critical role of consumption values in influencing consumer intentions and behaviors toward eco-friendly products, providing valuable insights for marketers and policymakers aiming to promote sustainable consumption practices. Despite the strong findings, there are still areas that require further exploration, including the need for longitudinal research that can provide insights into the dynamics of eco-friendly purchasing behaviors over time and focus on diverse demographic groups and different socioeconomic contexts.

Table 1. Literature Review

Author	Research Objective	Research Constructs	Research Method	Research Findings
Joibi and Annuar (2021)	To examine the impact of consumption values on the intention to visit eco-friendly hotels in Malaysia, considering how consumption values influence the preferences of domestic and international tourists.	Functional value, conditional value, social value, emotional value, and epistemic value based on the TCV.	The survey method used Cross-sectional with a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire distributed offline to respondents in several regions of Malaysia.	All dimensions of consumption value potentially have a positive influence on the intention to visit eco-friendly hotels, and it also indicates that environmental concern in hotel services can shape eco-friendly behavior among tourists.
Dilotsotlhe and Duh (2021)	To identify factors influencing the attitudes and purchasing behaviors of South African middle-class consumers towards eco-friendly devices through a multi-theoretical approach.	Integrating the TCV, the Theory of Diffusion of Innovations (DOI), and the TPB focusing on functional, conditional, epistemic, social, and emotional value. besides that, it also uses relative advantage, compatibility, and observability.	Quantitative survey directly to 500 black South African middle-class respondents, with data analysis using PLS-SEM.	Functional, conditional, and epistemic values significantly influence attitudes towards eco-friendly devices, which then affect behavioral intention and actualization of purchasing behavior; social value and perceived behavioral control also have a positive impact on behavioral intention.
Pauluzzo and Mason (2022)	To identify the combination of consumption values that can explain socially responsible consumer behavior among Generation Y fast-fashion consumers.	Consumption values (Functional, Social, Emotional, Conditional, and Epistemic Value) were analyzed in relation to socially responsible consumer behavior.	Cross-sectional using pretest Interviews were conducted, followed by a survey of 943 Generation Y fast-fashion consumers, using fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis.	Socially responsible consumer behavior among Generation Y does not depend on a single consumption value but is the result of a combination of various dimensions of consumption value.

Author	Research Objective	Research Constructs	Research Method	Research Findings
Mason et al. (2023)	To clarify the relationship between consumption values (TCV) and consumer behavior and to explain the variability of results across studies in different contexts.	Consumption values (Functional Value, Conditional Value, Social Value, Emotional Value, Epistemic Value) in relation to consumer behavior.	Meta-analysis of 82 studies from various countries using a random effects model and psychometric meta-analysis approach.	Consumption values positively influence consumer behavior, with emotional value being the strongest predictor, while social value is the weakest, showing differences in impact across contexts and research methods.
Rachman and Amarullah (2024)	To investigate the influence of consumption values on the attitudes and repurchase intentions of green products in the form of halal cosmetics in Indonesia.	Functional, conditional, social, emotional, and epistemic values in the TCV, as well as attitudes and repurchase intentions.	Online survey method with a questionnaire distributed to 233 Muslim consumers in Indonesia and data was analyzed using Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).	Functional, conditional, social, emotional, and epistemic values positively influence attitudes toward halal cosmetics, and these attitudes contribute positively to the intention to repurchase halal cosmetics.
Rahman et al. (2020)	To examine the influence of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control on purchase intentions and the effect of purchase intentions on the actual purchasing behavior of green products in Bangladesh.	Attitudes towards the environment, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, behavioral intention, and actual purchasing behavior.	Quantitative survey with a questionnaire adapted from previously validated instruments, involving 240 respondents selected through purposive sampling and analyzed using PLS-SEM.	Attitudes towards the environment, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control positively influence purchase intentions, and purchase intentions positively influence the actual purchasing behavior of green products.
Susanty et al. (2021)	To examine the influence of learning factors, social cognitive	Experiential learning, contextual factors, green marketing,	A quantitative survey using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire	Outcome expectations, self-efficacy, and subjective norms have a significant

Author	Research Objective	Research Constructs	Research Method	Research Findings
	factors, and green marketing on the intentions and behaviors of purchasing green products.	outcome expectations, self-efficacy, subjective norms, behavioral intention, and actual purchasing behavior.	was conducted with 602 respondents, who were selected through a mix of non-probability sampling methods, and the data were analyzed using SmartPLS 3.0.	positive impact on the intention to purchase green products; purchase intentions have a significant positive impact on actual purchasing behavior, and green marketing strengthens the relationship between purchase intentions and actual purchasing behavior. Learning experiences affect outcome expectations and self-efficacy and are influenced by demographic and contextual factors.
Yadav et al. (2022)	To examine factors influencing consumer intentions in purchasing recycled shoes using the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the TPB.	Perceived environmental knowledge, subjective norms, sustainable label awareness, shoe selection motivation, attitude, purchase intention, and purchasing behavior.	The quantitative method with an online questionnaire distributed to 268 respondents in India and data analysis was performed using regression analysis to test relationships among variables.	Perceived environmental knowledge, subjective norms, sustainable label awareness, and shoe selection motivation influence attitudes, while attitudes, word of mouth, and environmental awareness influence purchase intentions. Sustainable label awareness, the desire to own multiple shoes, and purchase intentions influence purchasing behavior. The relationships among constructs in TPB indicate that social factors and environmental awareness play important roles in driving intentions and purchasing behavior of recycled shoes.
Aliedan et al. (2023)	To explore the factors influencing	Attitude towards green investment,	A survey method was used with an	Attitude, perceived behavioral control, knowledge of green

Author	Research Objective	Research Constructs	Research Method	Research Findings
	green investment intentions in the Saudi food industry using an extended version of the TPB model.	subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, knowledge of green investment, commitment to green consumption, and religiosity as moderating factors.	online questionnaire completed by 550 recent graduates in agriculture and food science from universities in Saudi Arabia, and the data were analyzed using PLS-SEM techniques.	investment, and commitment to green consumption have a positive effect on green investment intentions, whereas subjective norms negatively influence them. Religiosity acts as a moderating factor in the relationships between attitude, perceived behavioral control, and green consumption commitment with green investment intentions.
Dinc-Cavlak and Ozdemir (2024)	To investigate the behavior of repeat organic food purchases, focusing on the discrepancy between intention and actual purchasing behavior.	Social norms, attitude, perceived behavioral control, food safety concerns, health consciousness, trust, and knowledge of organic food.	Data was gathered via an online survey from 594 local farm customers and analyzed using structural equation modeling.	The extended model shows that intention and perceived behavioral control mediate the relationship between trust and organic food purchasing, with trust moderating the link between intention and purchasing behavior.

DISCUSSION

Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study provide important contributions to the development of theory in understanding the purchasing behavior of green products through the lens of the TCV and TPB. TCV indicates that the dimensions of functional, social, emotional, and epistemic values significantly influence consumers' intentions to purchase environmentally friendly products. This underscores that consumer decisions are not only based on utilitarian aspects but are also influenced by the identities and values they hold. On the other hand, TPB highlights the importance of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control as key elements in the decision-making process. The integration of these two theories offers a deeper understanding of the interaction between consumption values and social factors in the context of sustainability, thereby providing a more comprehensive theoretical framework for future research.

Practical Implications

From a practical perspective, the results of this study can serve as guidelines for marketers and decision-makers in designing more effective marketing strategies for green products. By understanding that functional and emotional values significantly impact consumer intentions, companies can create marketing messages that emphasize

the practical and emotional benefits of environmentally friendly products. Additionally, considering the important roles of subjective norms and behavioral control, marketers can build campaigns that involve community support or influencers to enhance awareness and foster positive attitudes toward green products. With this approach, it is hoped that there will be an increase in the intention and purchasing behavior of sustainable products among consumers.

CONCLUSION

This research aims to examine the factors influencing the purchase of green products by SMEs in developing countries, focusing on TCV and TPB theories. The analysis results show that TCV helps to understand the purchasing behavior of green products through consumption value dimensions such as functional, social, emotional, and epistemic values, which significantly influence consumer intentions. Consumers tend to choose products that meet functional needs and align with their personal values and identities.

TPB emphasizes the role of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control in shaping purchasing intentions and behaviors. Positive attitudes toward the environment, social support, and a high perception of control over purchasing behavior can encourage consumers to buy green products. The combination of TCV and TPB provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing green purchasing decisions, offering a holistic theoretical framework for understanding the dynamics of green product purchases by SMEs in developing countries.

Practically, the results of this study provide guidelines for marketers and decision-makers in designing effective marketing strategies for green products. Emphasizing the functional and emotional benefits of environmentally friendly products, as well as campaigns involving community support or influencers, is expected to enhance the intention and behavior of sustainable product purchases. Although this research focuses on articles published between 2020 and 2024 and uses TCV and TPB as the main frameworks, there are opportunities for further research with different contexts or methodologies to explore other factors that may influence green purchasing decisions.

LIMITATION

This study provides a deep understanding of the purchasing decisions for green products by SMEs in developing countries through a systematic literature review. However, there are several limitations, including the focus on articles published between 2020 and 2024, which may overlook relevant prior research. Moreover, although this study prioritizes TCV and TPB theories as theoretical frameworks, other approaches may also have significant contributions. These limitations actually open opportunities for further research that can examine the relationship between these findings and different contexts or methodologies.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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