

The Moderating Role of Price Sensitivity on the Relationship Between Consumers Environmental Knowledge and Green Purchase Intentions

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Abstract

Research Objective: To assess the impact of Environmental Knowledge on Green Purchase Intentions. To empirically investigate the moderating effects of price sensitivity on consumers green knowledge and their subsequent purchase intention.

Methodology: This study uses a survey method with a structured 5-point Likert scale questionnaire to gather cross-sectional data from customers utilizing a quantitative and descriptive research design. 153 eligible people in Sagar District were surveyed using a purposive sample technique. Fifteen items on price sensitivity, green buying intention, and environmental knowledge were included in the questionnaire. Quantitative analysis is done by using reliability, correlation, regression, and moderation analysis with SPSS software.

Key Findings: Green purchase intention is significantly positively impacted by environmental awareness ($\beta = 0.581$).

Purchase intention and environmental knowledge have a strong positive association ($r = 0.69$).

Green purchase intention is negatively impacted by price sensitivity ($r = -0.32$).

Price sensitivity considerably diminishes and moderates the association ($\beta = -0.157$).

Moderation increases the model's explanatory ability (R^2 from 0.471 to 0.538).

Conclusion: Environmental knowledge enhances green purchasing behavior. However, high price sensitivity reduces this effect because by raising understanding and responsibility for the environment, environmental education favorably affects consumers' intention to buy green items. High price sensitivity, however, undermines this link since consumers who are environmentally conscious may steer clear of green items if they think they are costly.

Keywords: Environmental Knowledge, Price Sensitivity, Green Purchase Intention, Moderating Effect.

Background and Context

One of the most important issues of the modern era is the growing environmental problem, which has drawn previously unheard-of attention to sustainable consumption habits. It is more important than ever to change consumer behavior to make environmentally friendly decisions because global temperatures are predicted to rise by at least 1.5°C between 2024 and 2028 (World Meteorological Organization 2024). Green consumption is a developing notion that reflects consumers increased awareness of environmental

issues and their desire for eco-friendly items in reaction to change in climate and environmental degradation (Kumar et.al., 2021; Severo et. al., 2021).

Translating customers environmental consciousness into actual green purchasing behavior is still a persistent difficulty, despite increased global awareness and good attitudes toward environmental sustainability. A major obstacle to attaining widespread sustainable consumption is this phenomenon, which is sometimes termed as the green gap or gap in the attitude behaviour. According to research, even if a sizable percentage of consumers say they care about the environment and are eager to embrace sustainable behaviors their actual purchasing behavior often deviates from these declared intentions (Nguyen et.al., 2019; ElHaffar et.al., 2020). Businesses, legislators and environmental advocates who want to encourage sustainable consumption habits must comprehend the variables that affect this translation from purpose to conduct.

Environmental Knowledge as a Determinant of Green Purchase Intention

Across a wide range of cultural and geographic contexts, environmental knowledge has been widely shown as a key precursor of green purchase intention. According to Fryxell and Lo (2003), environmental knowledge is an individual's understanding of environmental challenges, the relationship that led to environmental repercussions, and the environmental responsibilities required for sustainable development. The literature makes a distinction between several aspects of environmental knowledge such as general versus specific knowledge and subjective versus objective knowledge each playing distinct roles in shaping consumer behavior (Lee, 2017).

The environmental information is important in the setting of green consumption has been further highlighted by recent research. According to research, moral obligation partially intervenes the relationship between green purchase behaviour and environmental awareness which is considerably and favorably influenced by it (Zhang et al., 2024). Furthermore the association amongst green purchasing intention and actual green purchase behavior has been found in the direction of be moderated by environmental knowledge, indicating its dual role as a conditional factor and a direct antecedent (Silva et al., 2025).

However, there isn't always a continuous correlation amongst environmental knowledge and the intent to make green purchases. According to some research, environmental information did not always encourage green purchasing behavior, especially in specific cultural or economic circumstances (Jaiswal & Kant, 2018; Shatnawi et al., 2019). These discrepancies emphasize how crucial it is to look into potential moderating factors that could improve or worsen the knowledge intention link in various contexts.

Price Sensitivity as a Moderating Variable

Price sensitivity's moderating effect on green consumption has attracted more scholarly attention, but it hasn't been thoroughly examined in the particular context of environmental awareness and green purchase intention. When a moderating variable (the moderator) affects the direction or intensity of the link between an independent variable and a dependent variable, this is known as a moderating effect. Price sensitivity may change the degree to which environmental information influences green purchasing intentions in the context of green consumption.

Price sensitivity has a moderating effect through a number of techniques. According to Hsu et al. (2017), price serves as both an informative signal that provides insights into the quality of a product and a meter of trade-off value that indicates the financial expense connected with a product. Even when they have a

great deal of environmental information, price-conscious consumers typically have fewer favorable attitudes and show less interest in eco-friendly items (Zepeda & Deal, 2009; Karuppiah & Ramayah, 2023).

Price sensitivity negatively moderates the relationship between green purchase intention and actual behaviour, according to recent research specifically examining the moderating role of price sensitivity on green purchase intention and behaviour. This suggests that even well-formed intentions can be disrupted by economic constraints (Vietnamese Consumer Study, 2025). This conclusion is very important since it shows that price sensitivity affects not just the creation of intentions but also the crucial point at which intentions become real purchases.

There are still a number of research gaps in spite of these significant achievements. First, although price sensitivity's moderating effect on the attitude-intention relationship has been studied, nothing is known about how it specifically affects the environmental knowledge-green purchasing intention pathway. Few studies have studied the moderating influence of price sensitivity in green purchase behaviour as of 2024, and the literature currently in publication does not highlight this moderating effect. Instead, recent study themes have solely looked at the negative link. Second, given that knowledge and price sensitivity may interact differently than attitude and price sensitivity, more thorough research is needed to determine the processes via which price sensitivity either increases or decreases the knowledge-intention link.

Theoretical Framework and Research Rationale

An essential cognitive component that helps consumers choose environmentally friendly items is environmental knowledge. According to research, consumers' inclination toward sustainable products is impacted by their degree of environmental awareness, worry, attitude, social factors, and perceived behavioral control (Harjadi & Gunardi, 2022). However, when economic restrictions are prominent, knowledge might not be enough to influence buying intentions. Price sensitivity creates a conflict between economic pragmatism and cognitive understanding by introducing a contextual limitation that may lessen the beneficial impact of environmental information.

There are important theoretical and practical ramifications to comprehending how price sensitivity moderates the knowledge-intention relationship. In theory, it advances a more thorough comprehension of the boundary conditions that allow environmental knowledge to efficiently convert into purchasing intents. Practically speaking, this information can guide focused efforts meant to close the intention-behavior gap between various customer segments. For example, marketing strategies and policy interventions might concentrate on lowering perceived price premiums, emphasizing long-term cost savings, or creating financing mechanisms that make green products more accessible to price-sensitive consumers if price sensitivity considerably weakens the knowledge-intention link.

Review of Literature:

Consumer behavior toward eco-friendly items is greatly influenced by three closely related constructs: environmental knowledge, price sensitivity, and green buying intentions. Numerous studies demonstrate how consumer's intentions to buy green items are significantly influenced by their level of environmental understanding. For example, environmental knowledge and green purchasing intention were found to be positively and significantly correlated by Marwat et al. (2022); however, price sensitivity was found to play a negligible moderating influence. Similar to this, Malhotra and Srivastava (2023) noted that while it

has little effect on customer skepticism, increased environmental awareness increases psychological ownership, which in turn improves green purchasing intentions.

Conversely, price sensitivity has been found to be both a moderating and a barrier to green purchase behavior. Erdil Melek (2018) showed that among Generation Y customers, price sensitivity considerably moderates the association between environmental concern, environmental attitude and green purchase intention. Similarly, Wang et.al. (2020) found that price sensitivity moderates this link, especially through perceived food quality, while environmental consciousness positively increases the intention to purchase organic food. According to Ghosh (2020), price sensitivity adversely moderates the connection between pro-environmental sentiments and green purchasing intention, suggesting that higher prices may deter environmentally conscientious buyers.

Further research shows that a variety of factors, including perceived quality, marketing tactics, and trust, influence consumer's willingness to pay higher prices for environmentally friendly products. According to Sindhu et al. (2025), persons who care about the environment are prepared to pay more for sustainable items if they believe they are worth more. Chen et al. (2024) provided evidence to support this claim by demonstrating how the presentation of price premiums can positively impact consumer preferences by improving perceptions of firm effort and self-accountability. Despite favorable sentiments toward green items, Panchasara (2024) pointed out that actual purchasing behavior is frequently hampered by high costs, limited availability, and ignorance.

Furthermore, with the exception of subjective standards, Harun Amran et al. (2024) found that price sensitivity considerably moderates the link amongst important drivers like environmental concern and attitude with green purchase intention. Through a systematic review, Sharma (2022) came to the conclusion that while product-related factors like high cost, limited availability, and lack of convenience act as significant barriers, a wide range of factors, including environmental knowledge, attitude, and social influences, influence green purchase behavior.

Research Objective

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To empirically investigate the moderating effects of price sensitivity on the consumers green knowledge and their subsequent purchase intention.

Hypothesis

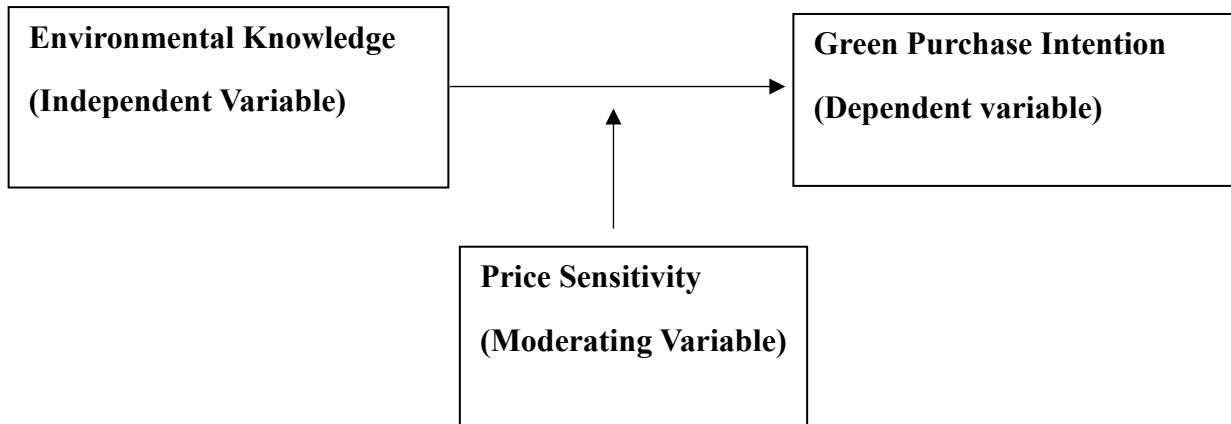
Null Hypothesis (H₀1): Environmental Knowledge has no significant and positive impact on Green Purchase Intention.

Alternate Hypothesis (H₁): Environmental Knowledge has significant and positive impact on Green Purchase Intention.

Null Hypothesis (H₀2): Price sensitivity does not significantly moderate the relationship between environmental knowledge and green purchase intention.

Alternate Hypothesis (H₂): Price sensitivity significantly moderates the relationship between environmental knowledge and green purchase intention.

Conceptual Framework



Research Methodology

Research Design and Data collection

This study involves Quantitative and descriptive approach of research. Survey method is adopted for collecting a data, a close ended structured questionnaire is administered personally using a 5-point likert scale. Cross-sectional approach is followed because data is collected at a particular point of time.

Sampling Method

Target Population of this study is General consumers of Sagar District of Madhya Pradesh who are aware of green or eco-friendly products (e.g., organic food, biodegradable packaging, energy-saving appliances). Sampling techniques followed for collecting a data is Purposive Sampling. Data is collected from 200 samples in which only 153 are appropriate and taken for analysis.

Questionnaire Measures

Five questions related to independent variable environmental knowledge, five questions from moderating variable price sensitivity and five more question are asked related to depended variable green purchase intention which is constructed on the scale of likert to know the opinions of the consumers related to green products.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Reliability Test (Table 1)

Variable	No. of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Environmental Knowledge	5	0.812
Price Sensitivity	5	0.784
Green Purchase Intention	5	0.836

To check the reliability and internal consistency of the construct, Coefficient of Cronbach’s Alpha were calculated for each of the three primary constructs: Environmental Knowledge, Price Sensitivity and Green purchase intention. According to the criteria a Cronbach’s Alpha value exceeding 0.70 indicates an acceptable and reliable level of internal consistency for social science research.

As shown in the reliability table, the Alpha values for all constructs ranged from 0.784 to 0.836. Environmental Knowledge (5 items) demonstrated a high reliability coefficient of 0.812. Price Sensitivity

(5 items) yielded a coefficient of 0.784, which is well above the recommended threshold. And, Green Purchase Intention (5 items) showed the highest internal consistency with an Alpha value of 0.836. Since all coefficients are above the threshold limit of 0.70, thus it may be concluded from this that the measurement scales used in this study are reliable and possess high internal consistency.

Hypothesis Testing

Step 1: Descriptive Statistics (Table 2)

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Environmental Knowledge	3.94	0.68
Price Sensitivity	3.61	0.72
Green Purchase Intention	3.88	0.7

The descriptive statistics show that the mean value of Environmental Knowledge (Mean = 3.94) is high which indicates that respondents are aware about the environmental concerns. Furthermore, Green Purchase Intention also presents a high mean (M =3.88) indicating a positive trend in buying green products.

Meanwhile, Price Sensitivity (Mean = 3.61) shows an average degree of respondents’ attention to price when they make purchase decisions.

The standard deviation values for all variables are below 1, indicating low variability and suggesting that the responses are relatively consistent across the sample.

Step 2: Correlation Matrix (Table 3)

	EK	PS	GPI
EK	1	-0.21	0.69
PS	-0.21	1	-0.32
GPI	0.69	-0.32	1

The correlation matrix shows a strong positive correlation between environmental Knowledge and green purchase intention ($r = 0.69$) that implies a higher level of environmental knowledge is related to a higher level of green purchase intention. Conversely, Price Sensitivity is negatively correlated with Green Purchase Intention ($r = -0.32$), which indicates that those who are more sensitive to prices will be less likely to participate in green purchasing. Moreover, the result that Environmental Knowledge is significantly negatively correlated with price sensitivity ($r = -0.21$) suggests that the environmentally conscious consumers are generally a little less price-sensitive.

Step 3: Regression Analysis (H1) (Table 4)

Variable	Beta	t-value	Sig
Environmental Knowledge	0.581	11.598	0
R Square	0.471		

The result of regression analysis shows that Environmental Knowledge positively and significantly influence green purchase intention ($\beta = 0.581, p < 0.001$). It can be seen that environmental knowledge explains about 47.1% of the variance of the green purchase intention with an R^2 value of 0.471.

This shows that was confirmed that environmental consciousness is a key factor to affect consumers’ purchasing behavior towards pro-environmental products.

Therefore:

Null Hypothesis (H01) is rejected

Alternate Hypothesis (H1) is accepted.

Step 4: Moderation Analysis (H2) (Table 5)

Variable	Beta	t-value	Sig
Environmental Knowledge	0.94	7.179	0
Price Sensitivity	0.732	4.582	0
Interaction (EK*PS)	-0.157	-3.814	0
R Square	0.538		

The moderation analysis shows that Price Sensitivity is a significant moderator of the Environmental Knowledge-Green Purchase Intention relationship. The interaction term ($\beta = -0.157, p < 0.001$) is significant, indicating the existence of a moderating effect.

Price Sensitivity interaction coefficient is negative, meaning Price Sensitivity negatively moderates the positive effect of Environmental Knowledge on Green Purchase Intention. In the other way, it means consumers' high environmental knowledge may not necessarily make them prefer sustainable products when they are price sensitive.

The R² value changes from 0.471 to 0.538 when the moderating variable was included, which indicates that the predictive power of TPB model was improved by considering the price sensitivity.

Null Hypothesis (H02) is rejected

Alternate Hypothesis (H2) is accepted.

Findings and Conclusion

Findings

According to the study, Green Purchase Intention is strongly influenced by Environmental Knowledge ($\beta = 0.581, p < 0.001$). With an R² of 0.471, consumers' level of eco-awareness accounts for over half of the variance in their intent. This confirms that consumers' psychological preparedness to buy sustainable items rises dramatically as they learn more about environmental issues.

Price sensitivity, however, serves as a crucial "dampening" aspect. The moderation analysis shows a significant negative interaction ($\beta = -0.157, p < 0.001$), showing that as price sensitivity increases, the positive impact of knowledge on purchase intent diminishes. In other words, even well-informed consumers may turn away from environmentally friendly options if they think the price is too expensive. By adding this moderator, the explanatory power of the model was increased to 53.8%.

Conclusion

The study comes to the conclusion that although environmental education is crucial, it is not a stand-alone remedy. Economic factors play a major role in either bridging or blocking the knowledge-intention divide. The results of this study unequivocally show that intend to make green purchase are significantly influenced by environmental knowledge. Cronbach's Alpha values exceeds the permissible threshold of 0.70, confirms the reliability of the measurement scales, and the reliability analysis verified that all constructs were internally consistent. Price sensitivity remained minimal, but descriptive data showed that respondents had a favorable predisposition toward green shopping and a relatively high level of environmental knowledge.

H01 was rejected because correlation and regression data showed a substantial and positive association between environmental knowledge and green purchase intention ($\beta = 0.581, p < 0.001$). Price sensitivity,

on the other hand, strongly reduced this link and showed a negative correlation with the intends to make a sustainable purchase. H2 is confirmed by the negative interaction effect ($\beta = 0.157$, $p < 0.001$), which shows that more price sensitivity reduces the beneficial impact of environmental knowledge. The study's overall conclusion is that, despite consumers' awareness of environmental issues, price factors still influence their purchase decisions. These results align with previous research highlighting price's crucial moderating influence in green consumer behavior (Marwat & Ahmad, 2022; Ghali-Zinoubi, 2020). In order to ensure that knowledge effectively translates into actual green purchasing behavior, policymakers and marketers should adopt a dual strategy: continue increasing environmental literacy to build intent while simultaneously addressing price barriers through subsidies, competitive pricing, or emphasizing long-term value.

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