

Green Purchase Intention and Green Brand Loyalty: Unveiling the Impact of Sustainability Awareness, Peer Discussion, and Status Consciousness

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Introduction: Research on factors influencing sustainable consumption is invaluable. This study investigated the role of sustainability awareness (SA), peer discussion (PD), and status consciousness (SC) in forming consumers' green purchase intention (GPI). In addition, this study investigated the impact of SC and GPI on green brand loyalty (GBL). Previous studies have examined how GPI can be formed by SA (Panda et al., 2020), PD (Tsarenko et al., 2013), and SC (Han et al., 2022); as well as the impact of GPI on GBL (Panda et al., 2020). However, no study has looked into the interplay among SA, PD, and SC in investigating GPI and GBL. This study filled this research gap by examining how SA and PD, as well as PD and SC, influence each other.

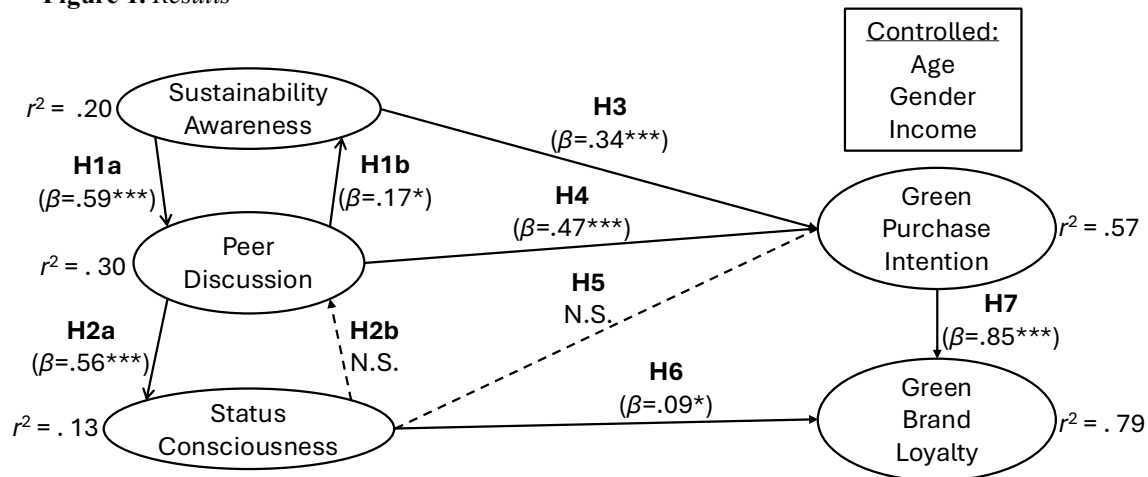
Theoretical Background and Hypotheses Development: Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1974) explains that consumers' sustainability practices and green buying intentions are influenced by each other within a society (Islam et al., 2024). This study suspects that sustainability-aware consumers discuss the benefits of sustainability products with other members of society, which can lead to further awareness. According to social identity theory, consumers are conscious about how to maintain a positive self-image within society (Sharma et al., 2020). This study suspects that, through discussion, when consumers learn that their peers are using sustainable products, they may choose to do the same to maintain a positive self-image. All hypotheses of this study are presented in Figure 1, where age, gender, and income were controlled.

Methodology: All measurement items were adapted from earlier studies and assessed using a 7-point Likert scale. The constructs included SA (Shen et al., 2012), PD (Lee, 2008), SC (Eastman et al., 1999), GPI (Armitage and Conner, 1999), and GBL (Chen, 2013). An online questionnaire was developed in Qualtrics, and data collection was performed in Prolific. A nationally representative sample of U.S. adults was obtained, and 289 valid responses were included in the analysis for this study.

Analysis and Results: This study examined the measurement and structural model (covariance-based structural equation modeling) using SmartPLS 4.1.1.1. The confirmatory factor analysis results showed that the measurement model fit the data well ($\chi^2 = 249.049$, $df = 110$, $p < .001$, $RMSEA = .066$, $SRMR = .034$, $CFI = .971$). The model met the requirements for reliability (Cronbach's Alpha), convergent validity (average variance extracted), and discriminant validity (Fornell-Lacker criterion). Then, to test the hypotheses of this study, structural equation modeling was performed. The

model fit indices were satisfactory ($\chi^2 = 298.208$, $df = 123$, $p < .001$, $RMSEA = .070$, $SRMR = .063$, $CFI = .955$). This study found that all the hypotheses were supported, except for the impact of SC on PD and GPI (H2b and H5). The results are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Results



Note. $*p < .05$; $**p < .01$; $***p < .001$

Conclusion and Implications: The findings of this study make a substantial contribution to social identity theory and sustainable consumer behavior literature, illustrating the relationships of SA, PD, and SC, as well as their significance in shaping each other. Additionally, this study revealed the role of SA, PD, and SC in shaping GPI and GBL. The impact of SC on PD was found to be insignificant ($p = .109$); however, a larger sample size may provide a different scenario. Based on this study's results, researchers and sustainable brands should look into how to enhance consumers' sustainability awareness as well as how to motivate consumers to discuss the benefits of sustainable products with their peers.

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