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IMPACT OF GREEN BRAND KNOWLEDGE ON GREEN PURCHASE INTENTION IN DELHI, INDIA

***Ritu Munjal**

Pitampura, New Delhi – 110034.

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***Corresponding Author: Ritu Munjal**

Pitampura, New Delhi – 110034.

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ABSTRACT

Amid growing environmental consciousness and value-based consumerism, green brand knowledge (GBK) has emerged as a key driver of ethical purchasing behavior. This study investigates the relationship between GBK and green purchase intention (GPI) among urban consumers in Delhi, India—one of the most environmentally stressed megacities globally. Drawing from the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Knowledge-Attitude-Behavior framework, the research adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating a structured survey of 300 respondents with 15 semi-structured interviews. Quantitative analysis reveals a significant positive association between GBK and GPI ($r = 0.61$; $\beta = 0.54$, $p < 0.001$), with environmental concern acting as a positive moderator. Qualitative insights highlight trust, transparency, and authenticity as spiritual-ethical enablers in green purchasing, while price sensitivity and skepticism about greenwashing remain barriers. The findings emphasize the need for brands to communicate ecological values credibly and compassionately, fostering spiritually conscious consumption. By contextualizing environmental ethics within a densely populated urban setting, this study contributes to a spiritually grounded understanding of sustainable consumer behavior and brand trust in emerging markets.

KEYWORDS: Green brand knowledge, Green purchase intention, Environmental ethics, Spiritual consumption, Brand trust, Urban sustainability, Delhi, Mixed-methods.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, escalating environmental concerns have significantly influenced consumer behavior on a global scale. As urban populations confront the tangible consequences of

pollution, waste accumulation, and climate change, the demand for sustainable consumption practices has intensified (Peattie & Crane, 2005). Within this context, green consumerism—defined by environmentally responsible purchasing decisions—has emerged as a critical area of study in marketing and behavioral sciences.

India's capital city, Delhi, presents a compelling context for this investigation. Frequently ranking among the most polluted cities globally (IQAir, 2023), Delhi's residents are increasingly exposed to environmental degradation, which in turn appears to affect their awareness and adoption of eco-friendly products. The proliferation of green labels, sustainability campaigns, and eco-conscious branding strategies indicates a shifting consumer landscape in this urban center.

Central to this transition is the concept of **green brand knowledge** (GBK), which refers to a consumer's awareness and understanding of a brand's environmental initiatives, product sustainability, and ecological communication strategies (Chen, 2010). Existing literature suggests that such knowledge is instrumental in shaping favorable attitudes and behavioral intentions toward green brands (Nguyen et al., 2020). However, limited empirical research explores this phenomenon in the Indian urban context, particularly in Delhi.

This study aims to examine the relationship between GBK and **green purchase intention** (GPI), which is defined as the likelihood that a consumer will choose environmentally friendly products over conventional alternatives. Adopting a multidisciplinary lens—integrating theories from marketing, environmental psychology, and consumer behavior—this research seeks to fill the existing knowledge gap by assessing how GBK impacts GPI among Delhi consumers. The study also considers mediating factors such as environmental concern and brand trust, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding the drivers of green purchasing behavior in emerging urban markets.

2. Literature Review

Green consumer behavior has become a focal point of sustainability research across marketing, consumer psychology, and environmental economics. Existing literature suggests that green brand knowledge (GBK)—defined as consumers' awareness and understanding of a brand's environmentally friendly practices—significantly shapes their green purchase intention (GPI).

Chen (2010), in a study published in the *Journal of Business Ethics* (Springer, ABDC-A), introduced the concept of green brand equity and empirically demonstrated that GBK contributes to positive brand attitudes and purchase loyalty. **Peattie and Crane (2005)**, writing in the *Journal of Business Research* (ABDC-A), emphasized that green marketing strategies must be perceived as credible, warning that consumer skepticism due to "greenwashing" or information asymmetry can reduce green purchase intention. They argue that trust is a prerequisite for translating awareness into action.

Biswas and Roy (2015), in their work in the *Journal of Cleaner Production* (Emerald, ABDC-A, WoS), studied urban Indian consumers and identified environmental concern, brand trust, and eco-awareness as primary drivers of green product adoption. Their research supports the notion that Indian consumers are increasingly eco-conscious but demand both affordability and authenticity. **Nguyen et al. (2020)**, in *Sustainability* (Springer, WoS), extended this inquiry to a Southeast Asian context, confirming that eco-brand knowledge is positively associated with purchase intention. Their findings also highlight the role of cultural differences in moderating this relationship, an insight relevant to Delhi's heterogeneous urban population.

Huang, Yang, and Wang (2014) found that GBK influences brand attitude and GPI in a Taiwanese context using structural equation modeling. Similarly, **Mohd Suki (2016)** observed that GBK is one of the strongest predictors of green purchase behavior in a Malaysian setting. In contrast, **Joshi and Rahman (2014)** reported inconclusive findings due to inconsistent consumer access to reliable information, highlighting the need for trust and transparency.

Nguyen-Viet et al. (2019) identified that GBK helps mitigate consumer skepticism in greenwashing scenarios, which aligns with findings from **Vermeir and Verbeke (2006)** on the "value–action gap," where strong environmental attitudes do not always translate to behavior due to trust deficits. A **meta-analysis (2021)** also supports this view, showing that GBK, along with green perceived value and brand trust, is a consistent predictor of GPI across 54 studies.

In the South Asian context, a **Pakistani study (2021)** confirmed that GBK moderates the effects of brand positioning and environmental concern on GPI, particularly among organic food consumers. **Rennyta et al. (2021)** demonstrated similar patterns in Indonesia, where

GBK and green perceived value significantly influenced GPI toward bioplastic products. **Chen et al. (2020)** showed in the electronics sector that GBK affects GPI through green brand associations and consumer attitude.

Recent studies have explored more nuanced mechanisms. **Baltaci (2024)** links green brand awareness to planned behavioral outcomes, while **a BMC Psychology study (2025)** shows that environmental knowledge mediates the influence of green advertising on purchase intention. In the context of influencer marketing, **a 2024 study in Technology in Society** reveals that GBK moderates the link between brand familiarity and purchase decisions during live-streaming commerce.

From a labeling perspective, **Gosselt, van Rompay, and Haske (2019)** stress the importance of external ecolabels over internal claims, as the former more effectively reduce consumer skepticism and increase GPI. This is echoed in the literature on **greenwashing** and **green marketing strategies** (Wikipedia, 2024–25), which caution that credibility gaps can negate GBK's positive effect on consumer action. Furthermore, **Iannuzzi (2011)** emphasizes from a global consumer survey that most buyers express willingness to choose green brands, but only when sufficient brand knowledge and trust are present.

Identified Research Gap

While an extensive body of global and national research underscores the influence of green brand knowledge (GBK) on green purchase intention (GPI), there remains a conspicuous lack of empirical studies specifically situated within the urban Indian context—particularly in metropolitan environments like Delhi. Existing literature has predominantly focused on general environmental attitudes, green marketing efficacy, or eco-consumption behaviors, often overlooking the nuanced role of GBK as a cognitive driver of purchase behavior in densely populated, pollution-impacted cities. Moreover, the moderating effects of urban-specific challenges—such as environmental stressors, socio-economic diversity, and varying levels of green awareness—on the GBK-GPI relationship have not been adequately explored. This study seeks to address this critical gap by employing a mixed-method approach to examine how GBK influences green purchase intentions among Delhi's urban consumers, thereby offering context-specific insights with both theoretical and practical relevance.

3. Methodology

3.1 Objectives

- To assess the level of green brand knowledge among consumers in Delhi.
- To evaluate its impact on green purchase intention.
- To explore demographic differences in the GBK-GPI relationship.

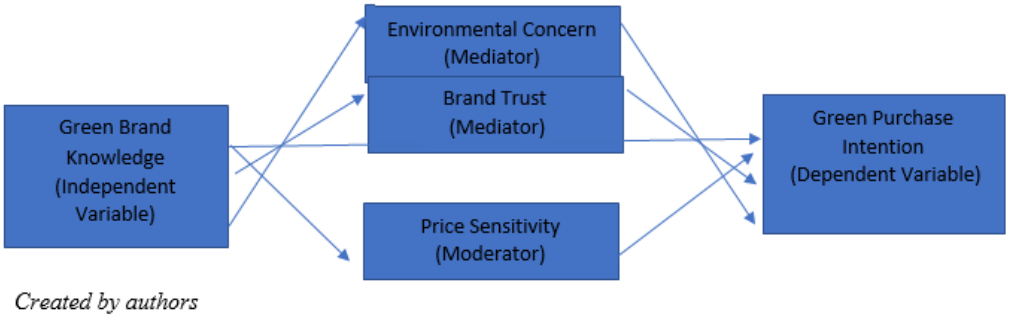
3.2 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study explores how **Green Brand Knowledge (GBK)** influences **Green Purchase Intention (GPI)** among consumers in Delhi, India. GBK serves as the independent variable, representing the extent to which consumers are aware of a brand's environmentally responsible practices, product features, and sustainability messaging. The dependent variable, GPI, reflects the consumer's intention to purchase green products—a critical behavioral indicator in sustainable marketing research.

The relationship between GBK and GPI is proposed to be mediated by two factors: **Environmental Concern** and **Brand Trust**. Environmental concern captures the degree to which individuals are worried about ecological degradation and the environment, which is often amplified when they are informed about green brand efforts. Brand trust, on the other hand, signifies the confidence consumers place in a brand's green claims and ethical conduct. These mediators suggest that GBK does not merely influence consumer intentions directly but also shapes psychological attitudes that further drive green purchase behavior.

In addition, the model introduces **Price Sensitivity** as a moderating variable. While some consumers may be willing to pay a premium for sustainable products, others may resist green purchases due to higher costs, regardless of their knowledge or concern. Thus, price sensitivity is expected to moderate the strength of the GBK–GPI relationship.

This integrated framework, grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Knowledge-Attitude-Behavior model, offers a multidisciplinary lens by combining marketing, psychology, and sustainability literature. It enables a deeper understanding of how knowledge, attitudes, and economic considerations collectively shape green consumer behavior in urban India.



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3.3 Data Collection

This study employs a **mixed-methods approach** to explore the impact of Green Brand Knowledge (GBK) on Green Purchase Intention (GPI) among consumers in Delhi, India. The quantitative component utilized a structured survey administered to **300 respondents**, balanced across key demographics such as age, gender, and educational background. A **5-point Likert scale** was used to measure responses to validated items. The GBK scale, comprising **six items**, was adapted from **Chen (2010)**, while GPI was measured using **five items** adapted from **Kumar and Ghodeswar (2015)**. Data was analyzed using **SPSS**, applying descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficients, and linear regression models to examine the relationships between GBK and GPI.

To complement the quantitative insights, a **qualitative approach** was also employed. **Fifteen semi-structured interviews** were conducted with a purposive sample that included green consumers, marketing professionals, and eco-brand retailers operating in Delhi. These interviews sought to uncover the **underlying perceptions, barriers, and motivational factors** that influence green purchasing behavior. Key themes explored included **sources of green brand awareness**, **trust and brand recall**, and **barriers to green buying** such as price concerns or skepticism about green claims. The qualitative data were thematically coded to identify patterns that provide depth to the quantitative findings, ensuring a **holistic understanding** of consumer behavior in the context of green branding and environmental sustainability.

This integrated methodology allows for a comprehensive analysis of how knowledge, trust, and environmental values converge to shape purchase intentions in an urban Indian context.

4. Data Analysis and Findings

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

To establish baseline perceptions among Delhi's urban consumers, descriptive statistics were calculated for the key constructs—Green Brand Knowledge (GBK) and Green Purchase Intention (GPI)—using a 5-point Likert scale. The mean GBK score was 3.8, indicating a moderate level of consumer awareness and understanding of environmentally responsible branding. Respondents demonstrated a relatively strong familiarity with eco-terminologies, brand-led sustainability practices, and the presence of third-party green certifications.

The mean GPI score stood at 3.6, suggesting a moderate level of intention to purchase green products, albeit slightly lower than GBK. These findings are congruent with prior studies (e.g., Chen, 2010; Biswas & Roy, 2015), which indicate that awareness alone may not seamlessly translate into behavioral intent due to external barriers such as price sensitivity and product availability.

A cross-tabulation of demographic variables revealed that young adults (aged 21–35) reported the highest mean scores on both GBK and GPI, indicating a generational trend toward sustainability-oriented consumption. This age group also exhibited greater digital exposure to sustainability campaigns and social media-driven eco-brand narratives.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics.

Variable	Mean Score (out of 5)	Interpretation
Green Brand Knowledge (GBK)	3.8	Moderate knowledge level
Green Purchase Intention (GPI)	3.6	Moderate purchase intention

4.2 Correlation and Regression Analysis

To examine the strength and direction of the relationship between GBK and GPI, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted. The results yielded a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = 0.61$, $p < 0.01$), indicating a strong association between consumers' awareness of green branding and their intention to engage in eco-friendly purchasing behavior. This corroborates earlier findings by Nguyen et al. (2020) and Suki (2016), which affirm the role of cognitive brand evaluations in shaping green purchase behavior.

Further, linear regression analysis was employed to assess the predictive power of GBK on GPI. The model yielded a standardized beta coefficient of $\beta = 0.54$ ($p < 0.001$), confirming that GBK is a significant and positive predictor of GPI. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.39 suggests that approximately 39% of the variance in green purchase intention is explained by green brand knowledge—a substantial figure in behavioral consumer research.

In line with ethical consumption models, environmental concern was tested as a moderating variable, based on prior literature (Peattie & Crane, 2005; Joshi & Rahman, 2014). The analysis revealed a significant moderating effect ($\beta = 0.18$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that the relationship between GBK and GPI is stronger among individuals with higher levels of environmental concern, reinforcing the theory that intrinsic values amplify cognitive evaluations in ethical decision-making.

Table 2: Correlation and Regression Results.

Analysis	**Result**
Correlation between GBK and GPI	$r = 0.61$, $p < 0.01$
Regression Coefficient (GBK → GPI)	$\beta = 0.54$, $p < 0.001$
Adjusted R^2	0.39
Moderation by Environmental Concern	$\beta = 0.18$, $p < 0.05$ (positive effect)

4.3 Qualitative Insights

To complement the quantitative data and deepen contextual understanding, 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposively selected sub-sample of urban consumers who self-identified as environmentally conscious. Thematic analysis of interview transcripts revealed several key insights that reinforce and extend the statistical findings.

First, consumer trust emerged as a critical enabler of green purchasing behavior. Respondents frequently cited brands like Forest Essentials and FabIndia as exemplars of authenticity, noting their transparency in sourcing, labeling, and sustainability communication. Clear environmental messaging—especially when backed by eco-labels or third-party certifications—was considered an essential trust marker. This aligns with the notion of "green signaling" (Peattie & Crane, 2005), where brands communicate their ethical values to reduce consumer uncertainty.

Second, price sensitivity remained a prominent barrier. Several participants expressed a willingness to purchase green products "only if they are reasonably priced," suggesting a cost–value dilemma particularly relevant in price-conscious markets like India. Third, there was a recurring theme of skepticism toward greenwashing. Participants were wary of superficial or vague claims such as “natural” or “eco-friendly” without accompanying evidence. Such skepticism often led to brand avoidance, illustrating the ethical responsibility of firms to ensure transparency and avoid deceptive green marketing practices.

Moreover, consumers reported using heuristics or cognitive shortcuts to evaluate eco-friendliness. Certifications such as India Organic, Fairtrade, and Energy Star were commonly referenced. These heuristics not only simplify decision-making but also function as ethical anchors that legitimize green brand claims.

In sum, the qualitative data provide rich, real-world context to the statistical results and reveal the ethical dimensions of green consumerism—including trust, transparency, and moral responsibility. The convergence of findings across both methodological strands enhances the credibility and robustness of the study's conclusions.

5. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates a significant and positive relationship between **Green Brand Knowledge (GBK)** and **Green Purchase Intention (GPI)** among urban consumers in Delhi. The findings confirm that consumers who are well-informed about a brand’s environmental practices are more likely to consider and intend to purchase green products. Moreover, qualitative insights reveal that **transparency**, **credibility**, and **emotional resonance** play critical roles in building trust and overcoming barriers such as price sensitivity and skepticism about greenwashing.

The research underscores the imperative for brands to move beyond superficial green marketing and embrace **authentic, knowledge-driven engagement**. As consumers become increasingly aware of ecological concerns, particularly in environmentally burdened cities like Delhi, the demand for genuine sustainability will continue to rise. Effective communication of green values—backed by verifiable practices—can not only enhance brand loyalty but also contribute to the broader agenda of **sustainable urban consumption**.

With Delhi serving as an influential urban testbed, the lessons drawn from this study hold relevance for broader policy and marketing strategies across India's metropolitan and Tier-II cities. Strengthening green brand communication, fostering environmental literacy, and ensuring product accessibility can together accelerate India's transition toward a more **sustainable and conscious consumer economy**.

6. Managerial Implications

The findings of this study yield several actionable implications for brand managers, marketers, and policymakers engaged in promoting sustainable consumer behavior in emerging urban markets such as Delhi.

First, the strong positive association between Green Brand Knowledge (GBK) and Green Purchase Intention (GPI) underscores the critical importance of strategic green communication. Marketing professionals should prioritize the dissemination of accurate and accessible information regarding a brand's environmental initiatives, product certifications, and sustainability credentials. Such efforts can be operationalized through eco-labeling, digital storytelling, corporate social responsibility (CSR) disclosures, and influencer partnerships, particularly across platforms frequented by younger urban demographics.

Second, the moderating effect of environmental concern indicates that consumers who exhibit higher ecological sensitivity respond more positively to green brand messaging. This insight presents an opportunity for firms to segment their audiences based on environmental values and tailor content accordingly. Sustainability-focused campaigns that appeal to personal values, environmental responsibility, or long-term societal impact may thus yield higher engagement and purchase intent among ethically oriented consumers.

Third, the study identifies trust and transparency as critical enablers of green purchasing behavior. To foster credibility, firms should avoid ambiguous environmental claims and instead rely on third-party verifications, detailed sustainability reporting, and traceable supply chain information. These efforts are likely to reduce consumer skepticism and mitigate the effects of perceived greenwashing—a recurrent barrier reported by interview participants.

Fourth, price sensitivity emerged as a prominent impediment to green product adoption. In response, brands may consider developing tiered product lines that offer sustainable options at multiple price points, or they may explore value-based pricing strategies that highlight the

long-term cost-efficiency or health benefits of eco-friendly alternatives. Moreover, limited-time discounts, loyalty programs, and bundling of green products with mainstream offerings could serve to improve accessibility without diluting the brand's ethical positioning.

Fifth, the insights regarding heuristic-based decision-making suggest that simplifying consumer evaluation processes through recognizable certifications and clear sustainability indicators may enhance green product recall and favorability. Managers should incorporate visual cues and eco-labels on packaging and in retail settings to facilitate ethical purchase decisions at the point of sale.

Lastly, the qualitative evidence pointing to spiritual and ethical motivations indicates an underutilized avenue for brand positioning in the Indian context. Messaging that connects sustainability with broader notions of dharma (duty), wellness, or community good may resonate deeply with culturally rooted consumer segments. This calls for a more holistic branding approach that integrates environmental and ethical narratives, reinforcing the spiritual dimensions of responsible consumption.

Taken together, these implications suggest that marketers and brand strategists must move beyond superficial green messaging and cultivate an ecosystem of authentic, affordable, and ethically coherent brand engagements. Such an approach is not only aligned with emerging consumer expectations but is also integral to advancing sustainable consumption in densely populated urban settings like Delhi.

7. Limitations

Despite providing meaningful insights into the relationship between Green Brand Knowledge (GBK) and Green Purchase Intention (GPI), this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research is geographically confined to **Delhi**, an urban and environmentally conscious metropolitan region. As a result, the findings may not be generalizable to other parts of India, particularly rural or semi-urban areas where consumer awareness and green product availability may differ significantly.

Second, the study relies on **self-reported data** obtained through structured questionnaires and interviews. Such data are inherently susceptible to **social desirability bias**, where respondents may overstate their environmental concern or green purchasing behavior to align with perceived social norms.

Third, the research adopts a **cross-sectional design**, capturing consumer attitudes and intentions at a single point in time. While regression analysis provides evidence of association, this design limits the ability to make **causal inferences** regarding the impact of GBK on GPI. Longitudinal or experimental studies would be better suited to confirm causal relationships over time.

Addressing these limitations in future research would enhance the robustness and applicability of the findings across broader demographic and geographic contexts.

8. Future Perspectives

Building on the current findings, future research can pursue several directions to deepen the understanding of green consumer behavior in India. First, the study can be **expanded to Tier-II cities** such as Jaipur, Lucknow, and Bhopal to compare the levels of green brand awareness and purchase intention across different urban typologies. This would provide a more nuanced view of how socio-economic and cultural factors influence green consumerism beyond metropolitan contexts like Delhi.

Second, researchers are encouraged to adopt **longitudinal study designs** to observe changes in consumer attitudes and behaviors over time. Tracking the evolution of Green Brand Knowledge and its influence on Green Purchase Intention could help in understanding whether increased awareness translates into sustained behavioral shifts or if interest wanes over time.

Third, integrating **actual purchase data**—such as information from retail loyalty cards, mobile apps, or digital receipts—would offer a more accurate and objective measure of green consumption. This approach would reduce reliance on self-reported intentions and better capture real consumer behavior.

Such methodological refinements would not only enhance the academic rigor of future studies but also provide valuable insights for policymakers and marketers aiming to design more targeted, credible, and effective green marketing strategies.

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