



## Foundations of Green Consumption: How Environmental Awareness and Green Marketing Foster Trust and Environmental Concern

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### ABSTRACT

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This research investigates the relationship of environmental awareness (ENAW) and green marketing (GM) as determinants of green consumption behavior (GCB) through the mediating roles of customer trust (CT) and environmental concern (ENVC). Although sustainability is increasing in relevance, limited empirical evidence has documented how these factors collectively influence consumers' behavior in developing economies. Using the Theory of Planned Behavior and Signaling Theory, survey data collected from 300 Pakistani consumers and analyzed through structural equation modeling. The results indicate that ENAW and GM have significant positive influences on CT and ENVC, which are positive predictors of GCB. Specifically, ENVC was found the strongest predictor of pro-environmental behavior. CT also decreased skepticism and increased confidence in green marketing claims. Mediation analyses indicated that awareness and marketing indirectly influence GCB through trust and concern. This study provides insights into the psychological mechanisms that influence sustainable consumption, as well as useful knowledge for policymakers and practitioners to develop credible and emotionally engaging approaches that foster green behaviors in developing markets.

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## 1.0 Introduction

Environmental degradation has significantly increased global concerns, influencing consumer behavior in recent years. Consequently, the rapid growth in environmental issues has made green consumption behavior an area of interest for practitioners and academia (Nguyen-Viet & Thanh Tran, 2024). In response to this growth, companies have started to closely observe the change in consumer behavior to stay in competition with other firms (Ahmad & Zhang, 2020). With climate change, pollution, and resource depletion becoming more and more pressing problem, consumers are increasingly aware of the environmental impact of their consumption patterns (Tang et al., 2024). Therefore, in order to achieve useful outcome for environmental protection, it is important to engage all the stakeholder in the efforts to protect environment (Tavitiyaman et al., 2024). However, involving stakeholder including consumer in sustainable practices merely depends on the level of environmental awareness they have. Therefore, consumer environmental awareness is way forward to achieve environmental protection (García-Salirrosas et al., 2024). Environmental awareness is the primary determinant of green consumption behavior, which entails a consumer's knowledge of environmental conditions and its response to them (Nguyen et al., 2022). Therefore, consumers are more inclined to seek products that align with their environmental values, with the belief that these products will lessen harmful ecological impact (Moslehpour et al., 2023). Moreover, with the increasing environmental concern firms are trying to take advantage of this trend by providing more socially and environmental products (Santos et al., 2024). Nowadays, firms are turning their focus toward more environmental friendly products (Szabo & Webster, 2021).

However, providing green products solely doesn't achieve environmental growth until it combines with green consumption behavior from consumers side (Liu & Madni, 2024). Therefore, awareness and consumption practices together could be a step toward achieving the UN's sustainable development goals (Zameer & Yasmeen, 2022b). However, despite the interest in sustainability, there is an attitude-behavior gap for green products, where consumers have favorable attitudes but are reluctant to buy (Xie et al., 2024). That is why consumers with environmental awareness express a preference for eco-friendly products, but this preference does not always becomes an intention to purchase because of lack of trust (Chanda et al., 2024). Moreover, according to Zameer et al. (2020), achieving sustainable growth does not merely depend on environmental awareness. This highlights the need for further exploration in the existing discussion about environmental awareness and green consumption behavior among practitioners.

Green marketing is assumed to be a source of environmental awareness (Wu & Chen, 2014). Many companies have recognized the importance of green marketing in meeting customer demands and improving competitiveness in the industry (Sohail, 2017). Therefore, green marketing emerges as a bridge for shaping consumer's purchasing behavior by fostering customer trust and raising knowledge about organic products (Rahmi et al., 2017). This, in turn, significantly influences customers' GCB (Iqbal et al., 2023). Studies have discussed the role of the green marketing mix (product, packaging, price, etc.) on consumption behavior and green marketing as a determinants of green consumption behaviors in Bangladesh (Ahmed et al., 2023). However,

past studies have concluded that consumer consumption behavior varies from country to country (Malik & Ullah, 2024; Rasheed et al., 2024).

In developing countries such as Pakistan, where environmental challenges are acute, the examination of green consumption behavior becomes particularly relevant. According to Aziz et al. (2024), climate change has emerged as one of Pakistan's primary concerns. The effects of air pollution caused by industries and other environmental issues (lack of green awareness) are the main reasons for states like Pakistan to develop behaviors of green consumption. Various studies have discussed GCB and green behavior in the context of Pakistani consumers (Rasheed et al., 2024; Saleem & Zhang, 2024). However, none of them have discussed environmental awareness (ENAW) and green marketing (GM) together with green consumption behavior (GCB). Therefore, to fill the potential gap, this dissertation addresses how factors like ENAW and GM reinforces GCB in Pakistan. Furthermore, the mechanism through which environmental awareness and green marketing reinforce green consumption behavior is unclear. In this nexus, customer trust (CT) and environmental concern (ENVC) plays a mediating role, acting as a bridge that connects the eco-centric initiatives of the companies with consumers' green consumption behaviors.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1. Green marketing and Customer Trust**

The growing importance of environmental protection initiatives have diverted the efforts of business toward green marketing. With the time, green marketing has gained recognition as a competitive approach to promoting services, business ideas and products, respectively (Nekmahmud & Fekete-Farkas, 2020). Green values of a products mainly depends on how effectively these values are promoted and communicated to the customers (Lin et al., 2017). By integrating green marketing techniques, firms can achieve five significant goals including maximizing sustainable potential, improving brand exposures, enhancing product value, urging customers to make green purchase behavior and lowering concerns about environmental degradation (Huang et al., 2024). Green consumption and customer demand for green products motivate companies to adopt more reliable green marketing strategies (Zhang et al., 2018).

Green Marketing (GM) is described as the extent to which consumers notice, develop favorable attitudes towards, and positively engage with advertisements that focus on the eco-friendly messages to sell a product or a company itself (Verleye et al., 2023). Within green marketing, the advertisements present the environmental upsides, including reducing greenhouse emissions, minimizing water pollution, and raising awareness about organic products (Nyilasy et al., 2014). Exposure to such green advertising carries perception and impression formations which helps in attitudes toward the advertisements and build trust in green brands or environmentally friendly products (Santa & Drews, 2023). Trust, therefore, is crucial for customer relationships in green marketing, reinforcing the brand's ecological claims' credibility.

Moreover, eco-friendly advertising, as well as green marketing strategies has a major impact on forming consumer attitudes and intentions. It has also been found that green consumption is positively correlated with performance on perceived credibility of organizations that advertise green initiatives (Santa & Drews, 2023). Consumers who are favorable toward green

products tend to exhibit a higher level of behavioral personality, including the propensity to pay a premium for green products (Huang et al., 2024). When consumers perceive green advertisements as credible and genuine, they tend to develop positive feelings and evaluations for the firm selling those products (Genoveva & Syahrivar, 2020). High level green marketing cultivates customer trust and credibility in a brand (Nguyen Viet & Nguyen Anh, 2021). Therefore, based on above mentioned logics, the following hypothesis is formulated,

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** Green marketing has a positive influence on customer trust.

## **2.2. Environmental Awareness (ENAW) and Environmental Concern (ENVC)**

Raising environmental awareness is one way to eliminate ecological problems on a global scale; it helps people understand the problems and impact on the environment more clearly (Saif et al., 2024; Seo et al., 2024). Similarly, environmental concern refers to an individual's emotional and ethical commitment to the preservation of the environment (Ahmed et al., 2021). Several studies show that people develop environmental awareness and responses when they learn about the threats and consequences of their actions towards the environment (Daoud et al., 2024; Parashar et al., 2023).

It asserts one way to solve environmental problems on a global scale as it encourages people to grow their understanding of ecological problems and their consequences (Darvishmotevali & Altinay, 2022). Moreover, Malhotra and Srivastava (2024) found that environmental awareness is a significant driver of environmental concern as it structures people's perceptions of environmental risk and the quick solution of it. Following the idea, Zameer and Yasmeen (2022b) examined that individuals with higher levels of environmental awareness also tend to express concern. Moreover, Germelmann et al. (2020), concluded that awareness enhances the sense of emotional congruency with these issues and encourages concern for action. These results extend people's generalized awareness to particular environmental emotional and cognitive concerns. Therefore, environmental information and insights enable the consumer to differentiate products that are perceived authentic and environment friendly which in turn enhances its level of trust.

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) further clarifies this relationship by suggesting that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived control interact to shape intention or behavior (Dangelico et al., 2024). With the TPB framework, environmental awareness refers to the cognitive processes that shape an attitude before recognizing the emotional and moral aspect of environmental involvement (Ahmed et al., 2021). This reflects the view of environmental concern as both a reasoned response and an emotional reaction. Past studies like Saifulina et al. (2023), strengthen this view by demonstrating that awareness and knowledge significantly contribute to the development of attitudes that align with environmental concern. Therefore, based on the empirical and theoretical evidence we propose that,

**Hypothesis 2 (H2):** Environmental Awareness (EV) positively influences Environmental Concern.

## **2.3. Green Marketing and Environmental Concern**

Green marketing has surfaced as a crucial area of inquiry and practice, driven by escalating

environmental concerns for sustainable development. This concept encompasses the creation, promotion, and distribution of products and services that prioritize eco-friendliness, with the goal of mitigating adverse environmental effects while satisfying consumer needs (Chen et al., 2024). The idea gained attention in the late 20th century as pressing issues such as climate change, resource depletion, and pollution came to the forefront. Moreover, (Arseculeratne & Yazdanifard, 2014) illustrate green marketing evolved from a niche approach to a widely accepted business practice, emphasizing its significance in aligning corporate goals with ecological sustainability. This transformation attributed to heightened consumer awareness, regulatory demands, and an acknowledgment of the long-term economic advantages linked to sustainable practices.

As Research indicates that consumers who are environmentally aware tend to buy eco-friendly products; however, their purchasing choices frequently based on factors like price, quality, and credibility associated with eco-labels (Duarte et al., 2024). Moreover, Nguyen Viet and Nguyen Anh (2021), further propose that emotional appeals within green advertising have the potential to strengthen brand loyalty among environmentally aware consumers.

In Pakistan, although green marketing remains at an emerging stage, it is progressively garnering attention due to increasing environmental hesitations alongside rising consumer awareness. The country confronts substantial ecological issues such as air pollution, water scarcity, and ineffective waste management systems, all driving interest towards sustainable solutions. Urban customers in cities like Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad, are growing more conscientious about these environmental matters; they exhibit readiness to invest more for green products (Ali et al., 2019). So following hypothesis is formulated,

**Hypothesis 3 (H3):** Green Marketing has the positive relationship with Environmental Concern.

#### **2.4. Environmental Awareness and Customer Trust**

The relationship between customer trust in green products and environmental awareness is complicated and involves many parts. According to Hasan and Du (2023), the higher environmental awareness creates supply chain elements that contribute to consumers trust in evaluating product greenness; hence, they are able to identify authentic greening products from others that are just greenwashed. The work of Khan and Mohsin (2017), also asserts that an individual holds a higher emotional attachment to green products due to common values or beliefs. However, these kinds of connections improve trust and loyalty, but especially if the consumer believes their purchase is helping to augment environmental goals. Additionally, Yener et al. (2023), found that environmental awareness has a positive effect on relationship with green product when the company presents its environmental practices in a transparent and verifiable manner. According to Ansu-Mensah (2021), awareness of a green product will more likely lead to customer trust as they associate it with their personal values as a critical mediator between awareness and purchase intention. Environmental awareness minimizes the perceived risks of green products and builds up trust thus influence customer's willingness to purchase. So the following Hypothesis is formulated,

**Hypothesis 4 (H4):** Environmental awareness has significant relationship with customer

trust.

## **2.5. Customer Trust and Green Consumption Behavior**

Customer trust is a crucial factor in consumer decision-making, particularly in the realm of sustainable consumption. It generally refers to a consumer's belief in the reliability, credibility, and integrity of the product, brand, or company (Ginting et al., 2023). Green trust, in the green consumption domain, means the trust of the consumer regarding the environmental claims made by the companies pertaining to their products or services (Hossain et al., 2022). When consumers perceive a company to be sincere in its commitment to sustainability, through credible eco-labeling schemes, third-party certifications, and transparent supply chains, these consumers are likely to engage with its products (Singh et al., 2024). In the digital age, where misinformation is quite normal, gaining trust in the green products is more challenging than ever (Wang & Walker, 2023), as the consumers often consider product transparency, company reputation, and recommendations from their peers in measuring credibility for environmental claims (Phan et al., 2023).

Research consistently supports the argument that trust significantly influences consumer engagement with sustainable products. Trust serves as an antecedent to green purchase intention, meaning that consumers who trust a brand's green claims are more likely to exhibit a higher willingness to buy eco-friendly goods (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Tarabieh, 2021; Wasaya et al., 2021). Research has repeatedly shown that trust is a significant antecedent of consumer engagement with sustainable products. Trust, in this case, can be viewed as a triggering factor for the subsequent stage, that is, the green behavioral intentions. The intention that is developed by trust encompasses a willingness that consumers exhibit toward buying eco-friendly goods. A lack of trust therefore, prevents green consumption behavior by increasing skepticism and resistance towards sustainable products (Nisa et al., 2022). When an authentic necessity to engage in corporate green activities is in doubt due to greenwashing, lack of specific sustainability messaging, or contradictory business practices, consumers are less likely to engage in green purchasing (Tarabieh, 2021). The Signaling Theory by Spence (1978), gives a solid theoretical underpinning for understanding the role of trust in green consumption behavior. According to Signaling Theory, consumer acceptance of signals, such as brand reputation, third-party certifications, and accessible environmental disclosures-is the key for the consumers to consider the credibility of a company's sustainability claims (Hu et al., 2015). By fulfilling consistent environmental and corporate responsibilities, companies win the trust of consumers, strengthening green purchase intentions and driving actual sustainable behaviors (Kumar et al., 2023). On the contrary, if companies cannot communicate clear and valid signals, consumers may become skeptical about them, leading to less green purchase behavior. Hence trust is the mechanism through which signals are interpreted and acted upon. Based on the arguments, the following hypothesis is developed,

**Hypothesis 5 (H5):** Customer Trust has a positive influence on Green Consumption Behavior

## **2.6. Environmental Concern (ENVC) and Green Consumption behavior (GCB)**

Consumer's environmental concern about climate change, pollution, and resource depletion encourages them to develop strategies about sustainability. Therefore, environmental

concern serves as a foundation for an individual's emotional, cognitive, and value-oriented involvement, that suppresses environmental degradation (Duong et al., 2022). Past studies present a strong relationship between environmental concern and green consumption (Hoang & Tung, 2024; Stojanova et al., 2023). Moreover, Raihan and Ramli (2024), concluded that people who are more environmentally concerned tend to buy sustainable products as they believe these products help them to contribute towards environmental protection. The findings of the study show that consumers are ready to pay a premium price for products and also extend their efforts to find sustainable products when they are more concerned about the environment. Saif et al. (2024), further demonstrated that environmental concern lead to more favorable attitudes towards green products, subsequently propelling them towards green consumption behavior. The results of this study show that environmental concern appears to express attitudes through the channel that directly affects consumption behavior (Durmaz & Akdoğan, 2024).

The Theory of Planned Behavior provides strong support to address this relationship between environmental concern and green consumption behavior. The TPB presumes that subjective norms, attitudes, and perceived behavioral controls influence intentions (Khan et al., 2023). When consumers perceive green products as a strong element towards sustainability, environmental concern serves as a catalyst for developing a positive attitude toward them (Simiyu & Kariuki, 2024). Therefore, based on the finding we hypothesizes that,

**Hypothesis 6 (H6):** Environmental Concern (ENVC) positively influences Green consumption Behavior (GCB).

## **2.7. Mediation Relationship**

Green marketing strategies namely, eco labeling, green advertising, CSR strategies of the corporation etc., have been proven to influence green behaviors of green consumption (Correia et al., 2023). In the Green consumption behavior, actions such as buying green products, limiting waste generation and supporting green brands is included. Nevertheless, green marketing does not always achieve green consumption behavior directly. Consequently, this skepticism calls for mediating variable that can bridge the gap between the green marketing and green consumption behavior.

The conceptualization of the study is based on the Theory of Planned Behavior Ajzen (1991) theory, which explain the mediating role of customer trust in the relationship between green marketing and green consumption behavior. The theory of TPB suggests that consumer attitudes and perceptions are shaped by green marketing initiatives which then affect behavior. But this attitude and perception is based upon the level of trust the consumers have in the company. For example, if a company consistently has transparent and consistent green marketing practice then it is more likely to build customer trust (Ha & Nguyen, 2019). Consumer skepticism is lowered because of this trust and the probability of engaging in green consumption behavior increases (Londaridze, 2024). On the contrary, if consumers perceive the green marketing efforts of a company as insincere or misleading; green marketing erodes the trust, and as a consequence impact of green marketing on green consumption behavior is reduced. There is empirical evidence for this mediating role. Customer trust is found to fully mediate relationship between green marketing and

green purchase intentions by (Yadav et al., 2019). Similarly, Wang and Walker (2023) also showed that consumers' trust in a brand's environmental claims can significantly enhance the impact of green marketing on green consumption behavior. Thus, following hypothesis is formulated,

**Hypothesis 7 (H7):** Customer trust works as a mechanism between green marketing and green consumption behavior.

The literature has identified environmental awareness (ENAW) as one of the most important factors influencing sustainable consumer behavior, but the direct impact of awareness on green consumption behavior (GCB) is inconsistent. Though environment knowledge can help the consumer know what is happening, it does not directly link to behavior (Jaiswal et al., 2022). There is a need to further understand the psychological mechanisms driving green purchase decisions, as evidenced by the gap between awareness and action. Owing to numerous studies that conclusively explored the relationship between green awareness and green consumption behavior, there is a growing interest in environmental concern as a mediator (Shehawy & Khan, 2024). Environmental awareness is an essential factor for sustainable consumption, yet it is not always conducive to pro-environmental behavior (Carrión-Bósquez et al., 2024). However, people interpret environmental concern as a collection of emotional and cognitive reactions to environmental degradation (Maduku, 2024), bridging the gap by inspiring consumers to take action based on their environmental awareness (Zameer & Yasmeen, 2022a). Therefore, it is essential to recognize that while environmental concern may inspire action, it also enhances the motivation to engage in behaviors that align with one's ethical values and personal beliefs about sustainability. This deepens the understanding of why concern influences behavior beyond mere awareness.

Moreover, environmental concern is considered an influencing factor of green purchase intentions (Duong et al., 2022). For instance, Hameed and Waris (2018), identified the environmental concern mediating the relationship between Eco label and eco conscious consumer behavior. In other words, the combination of environmental concern and environmental awareness can increase consumers' intentions to consume green products. This hypothesis extends the literature of existing research explaining what lies between awareness and sustained behavior. The relationship explains that it is the incorporation of emotional and ethical elements that actually drives green consumption. Therefore, we assume that,

**Hypothesis 8 (H8):** Environmental Concern mediates between environmental awareness and green consumption behavior.

Trust serves as a significant psychological determinant that guides the consumer decision-making process, especially in relation to green consumption behavior. In sustainable consumption literature, green trust refers to the belief by various customers that a product, service, or brand abides by certain verifiable environmental standards and conditions (Verleye et al., 2023). Environmental awareness is the primary determinant of green consumption behavior, which entails a consumer's knowledge of environmental conditions and its response to them (Nguyen et al., 2022). According to the Knowledge-Attitude-Behavior Model, simple knowledge does not translate into actual behavior but is mediated through an attitudinal influence on behavior (Teo et

al., 2023). This certainly adds credibility to this work through the explanation of how trust plays an important mediating role in bridging the gap between environmental awareness and green consumption behavior. Consumers need some credible inferences to get themselves moving through the awareness and action (Vasiljevic-Shikaleska et al., 2018). Numerous studies has used customer trust as a mediator between knowledge and behavior. For instance, Hossain et al. (2022) argued that green trust works as mediating bridge between environmental knowledge and pro environmental behavior. Moreover, Soltani and Lazreg (2024) concluded that acquiring knowledge about the product enhances the trust, which, in turn, affects consumer purchase behavior. However, knowledge reinforces awareness. Therefore, it is not enough to have knowledge of eco-labels considering the forces driving behaviors; consumers need trust that all labels are credible, transparent, and verified. Therefore we assume that,

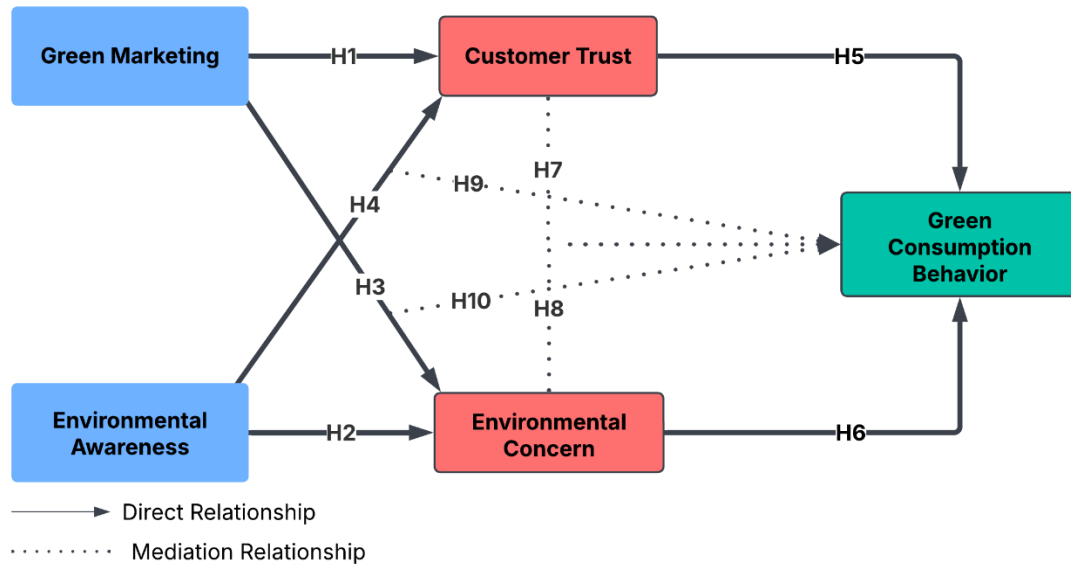
**Hypothesis 9 (H9):** Customer Trust has a mediating impact between Environmental Awareness and Green Consumption Behavior.

Research has shown that green marketing influences consumer behavior by significantly affecting consumer preferences for the selection of products and services that are environmentally friendly (Amoako et al., 2020; da Silva & Razzolini Filho, 2022) Moreover, green marketing reinforces customer consumption behavior towards green products (Hussain et al., 2020). These environmental initiatives have now become an integral part of corporate social responsibility (CSR), largely driven by consumer's growing awareness of their environmental impact (Shehawy & Khan, 2024). The relationship between green marketing and consumer behavior is particularly significant, as highlighted by Machová et al. (2022), who argue that consumers' comprehension of green marketing communications directly influences their behavior. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) proposes that consumer behavior is influenced by three main components: these being attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Michael et al., 2024). The TPB supports that green marketing can affect consumer attitudes towards eco-friendly products, forming subjective norms by conforming to social trends of sustainability, and enhancing perceived behavioral control by boosting consumer confidence to purchase green products (D'Arc et al., 2023). However, while green marketing influences these factors, environmental concern plays an important mediating role in green marketing and green consumption behaviors. The mediation hypothesis is built around the understanding that the concept of concern for the environment finishes two shapes; first an emotional and conscious boost to environmental problems happening to every individual (Wang et al., 2020), and playing the bridging role for establishing the linkage between the green marketing and the green consumption behavior (Jiang & Kim, 2015). Due to increased environmental issues and social concerns, companies have begun to adopt green practices (Saif et al., 2023). The mediation hypothesis is linked to the theoretical framework of TPB, in which environmental concern is the pivotal psychological mediator for marketing attempts to elicit sustainable actions. While it influences attitudes towards the products offered, it is environmental concern that translates into the behavioral intention for green consumption. Understanding this role of environmental concern as a mediator helps businesses and policymakers fashion effective marketing campaigns with an emotional appeal meant to

encourage pro-environmental behavior. The study develops the following hypothesis,

**Hypothesis 10 (H10):** Environmental concern works as a mediation between green marketing and green consumption behavior.

The framework ultimately positions green consumption behavior as the result of these interconnected relationships, providing a strong foundation for understanding the key drivers of sustainable consumption Figure 1.



**Figure 1 Conceptual Framework for Foundation of Green Consumption Behavior.**

### 3.0 Methodology

#### 3.1 Measurement

The present study utilized survey data to validate the theoretical assumptions. In order to collect data, questionnaire provides a systematic way to specify the reliability of the selected population (Moulaei et al., 2024). The questionnaire consisted of two sections, the first part consisted of demographic information, including age, nationality, gender, profession, and income, respectively. While the second part of the questionnaire consisted of variables measuring items including items of GM, ENAW, CT, ENVC, and GCB, respectively. In order to score the items, the study employed a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 5 denoting strongly disagree to 1 denoting strongly agree. The selected respondents were asked to measure these items according to the scale range Appendix C.

The items for each variable were taken from past studies. For example, in order to measure the Environmental awareness variable, a 3-item scale was taken from the study of (Zameer & Yasmeen, 2022a). Moreover, a 4- item scale was taken from the studies of (Cronin et al., 2011) and (Kim & Choi, 2005), to measure the variables of green marketing (GM) and environmental concern, respectively. Similarly, the variable green consumption behavior (GCB) was measured using a 4-item scale referred to in the study of (Yue et al., 2020). The three-items used to measure customer trust (CT) were borrowed from (Ye et al., 2019).

### **3.2. Sampling and Data Collection**

Since the questionnaire contained 18 items, the item-to-response ratio size was supposed to range from 64 to 160 per item-to-response ratio of 1:4 – 1:10, as suggested by (Kline, 2023). This shows that a sample size of 180 would be enough to achieve an accurate solution in exploratory factor analysis (Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1988). For a questionnaire containing 18 items Gu et al. (2023), the dissertation considered more than 400 samples suitable for further analysis. However, before the data collection through the questionnaire survey, following (Gu et al., 2023), five experts related to this field were requested to review the questionnaire draft. The questionnaire was revised as suggested by the experts. After the inspection and verification of the questionnaire by the experts, a pilot test for 30 samples was carried out to confirm the validity of the questionnaire items. The tested the internal consistency was tested of the questionnaire by estimating Cronbach's Alpha. The pilot testing revealed that Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.743 to 0.847, which was estimated to be acceptable for further data collection. The questionnaire was distributed amongst more than 600 respondents in different cities of Pakistan using random sampling technique. Various channels such as social media, alum networks, friends, and personal recommendations were used to invite the respondents for data collection. The survey was conducted anonymously to ensure the study's integrity and anonymity. Participants were assured that their data would not be shared and would be used solely for the intended research. Out of 600 respondents, 300 valid responses were obtained for the required number of samples. Therefore, in light of the recommendation of Kline (2023), the total number of responses exceed the required criteria. The respondents completed the questionnaire survey within 10 minutes, and the data collection process lasted for 60 days.

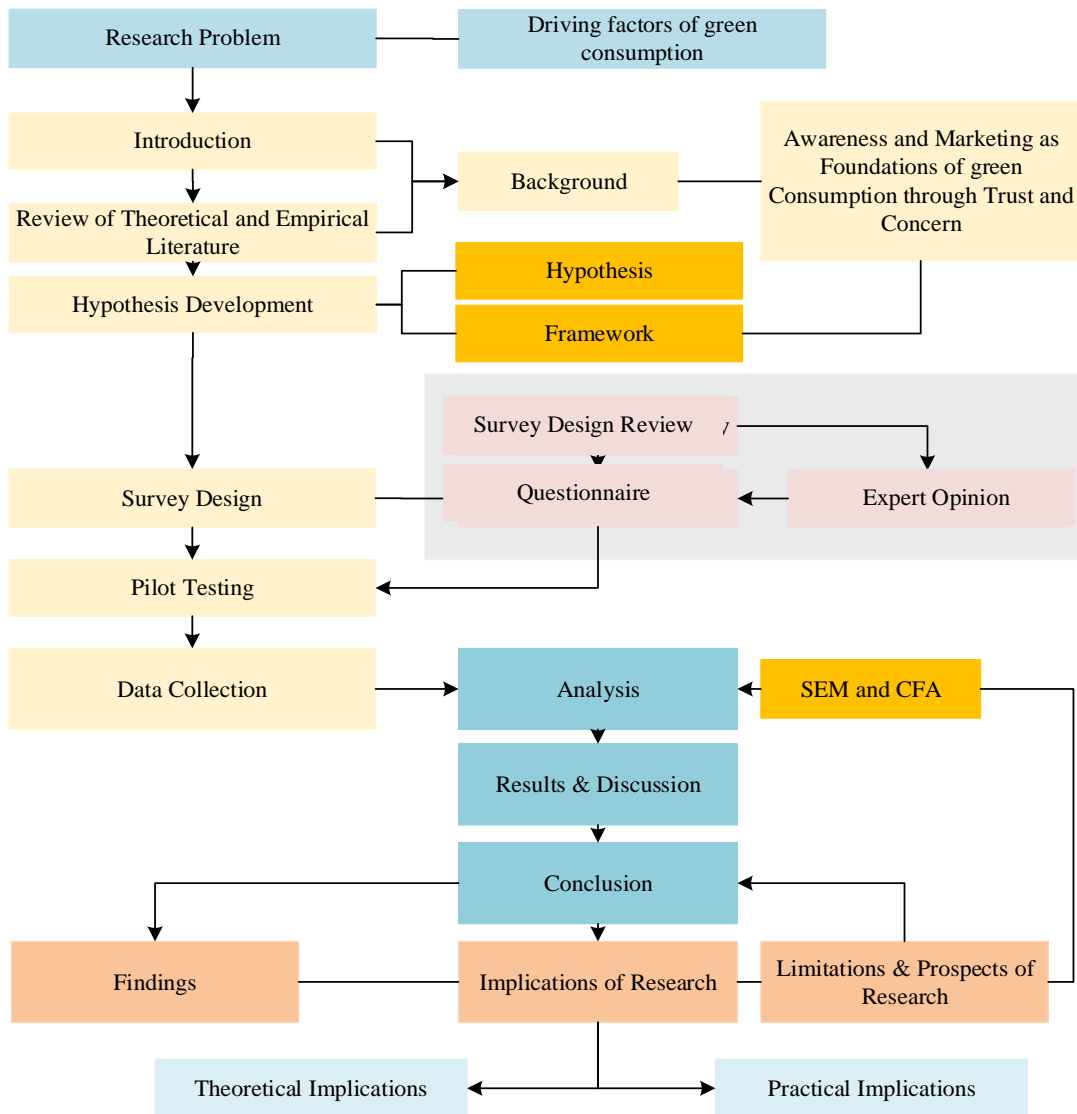
### **3.3. Data Description**

The analysis of demographic information in this study revealed that 52% of the participants were male, while 48% were female, reflecting a more balanced gender distribution. Participants were spread across different age groups, with the largest segment being in the 20-40 years age range, comprising 60% of the sample. The remaining respondents were aged 41 and above. In terms of educational background, the sample was diverse: 41% of participants held a master's degree, 40% had a bachelor's degree, and 19% held a Ph.D. This distribution reflects a more representative sample of educational attainment levels across the broader population.

To ensure diversity in socio-economic backgrounds, random sampling was employed, providing a more accurate representation of the Pakistani population. The sample included participants from various income brackets, with 25% of the sample earning between 10,000 – 30,000 PKR, 35% earning between 30,000 – 60,000 PKR, and 40% earning over 60,000 PKR per month. This distribution provides a more comprehensive view of the socio-economic diversity in Pakistan. The use of random sampling improved the generalizability of the results, minimizing selection bias and offering stronger statistical inferences about the broader population of Pakistan. However, while the demographic diversity was enhanced, it is important to note that certain socio-economic trends may still be reflected in the sample. Future studies could further address this by refining demographic targeting or expanding the sample size to fully capture the diversity of the

population.

The method we used to analyze the required data is mandatory for the validity and reliability of the observational research. An improper analysis technique may produce false results. Choosing an appropriate analytical strategy to obtain accurate empirical estimations is vital. For this study, we used the software tools SPSS 24.0 and AMOS 23.0 based on the two-step approach (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). While also considering the sample size and prior research (Bryne, 2010). Hair et al. (2013), stated that structural equation modeling (SEM) is a reliable and effective practice for interpreting survey data. SEM is one of the most reliable and flexible statistical tools to check the validity and of the model and testing of the hypothesis. SEM provides an insightful description of both direct and indirect relationships of the variables. We investigated the relationships predicted in the second phase using SEM. Three hundred valid responses, 5000 resamples, and a 95% confidence interval were utilized in the bootstrapping process to test mediating pathways. The research design of the study is given in Figure 3.2.



**Figure 2 Research Flowchart for Foundation of Green Consumption Behavior.**

**4.0 Findings and Results**

**4.1 Measurement Model Assessment**

The first step was to test the validity and reliability. The present study aims to test the hypothesis formulated in the preceding sections. The study presents the confirmatory factor analysis results, including the factor loadings. The particular table is used for several tests of reliability. The data presented in Table 1 indicate that all constructs examined in the study exhibited factor loading values exceeding the established threshold level of 0.50. Furthermore, the statistical analysis revealed that these results were significant at 0.001. The model is satisfactory according to the goodness of fit criteria, including CFA (Figure 3), GFI, NFI, RMSEA, and RMR. Therefore, assessing the indicator's reliability is the following step. The indicator's reliability is assessed using factor loadings. When factor loading exceeds 0.5, the indicator's reliability testing is sufficient (Bagozzi & Yi, 1991). Table 1, displays the result. The results show that all factors are loaded correctly.

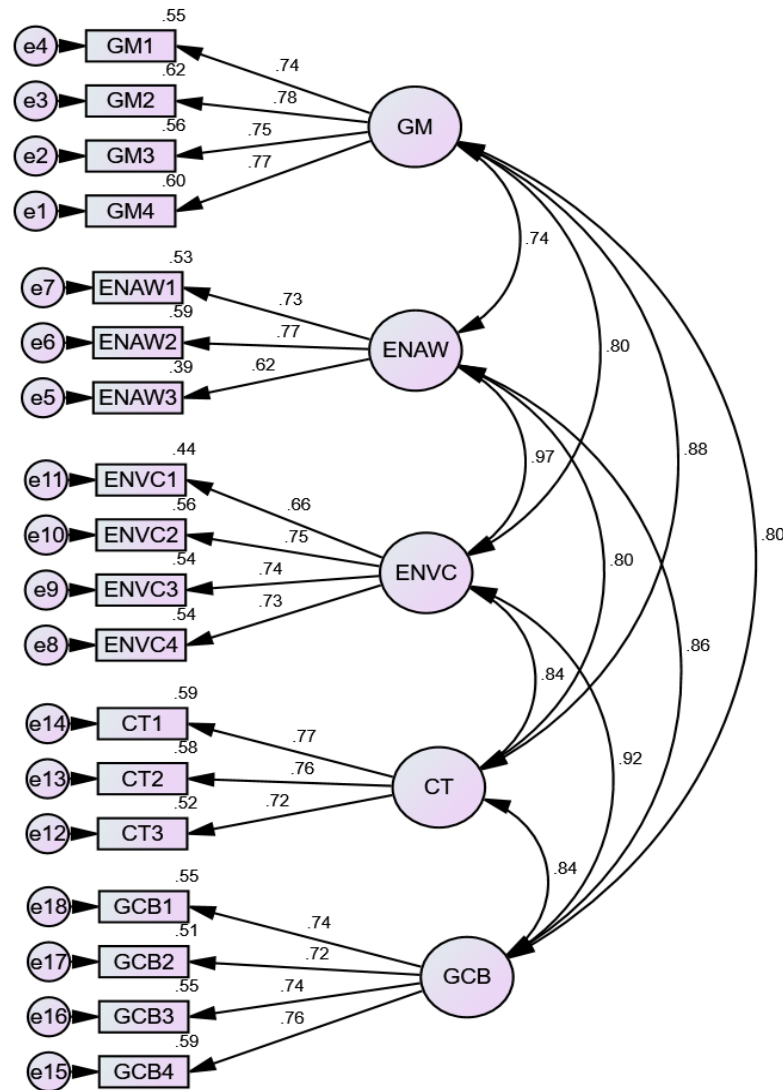
**Table 1 Constructs and Reliability Indicator's Factor Loadings**

<b>Constructs</b>	<b>Factor Loadings (&gt;0.50)</b>	<b>Cronbach's <math>\alpha</math> (&gt;0.70)</b>	<b>CR (&gt;0.70)</b>	<b>AVE (&gt;0.50)</b>
<b>Green Marketing</b>	-	0.847	0.847	0.581
<b>GM1</b>	0.744			
<b>GM2</b>	0.785			
<b>GM3</b>	0.748			
<b>GM4</b>	0.772			
<b>Environmental Awareness</b>	-	0.743	0.751	0.504
<b>ENAW1</b>	0.725			
<b>ENAW2</b>	0.771			
<b>ENAW3</b>	0.725			
<b>Environmental Concern</b>	-	0.810	0.811	0.519
<b>ENVC1</b>	0.662			
<b>ENVC2</b>	0.748			
<b>ENVC3</b>	0.735			
<b>ENVC4</b>	0.733			
<b>Customer Trust</b>	-	0.792	0.794	0.562
<b>CT1</b>	0.768			
<b>CT2</b>	0.760			
<b>CT3</b>	0.721			
<b>Green Consumption Behavior</b>	-	0.829	0.830	0.550
<b>GCB1</b>	0.741			
<b>GCB2</b>	0.716			
<b>GCB3</b>	0.743			
<b>GCB4</b>	0.765			

*Note: Green Marketing (GM), Environmental Awareness (ENAW), Environmental Concern (ENVC), Customer Trust (CT), Green Consumption Behavior (GCB)*

Afterward, internal consistency reliability was evaluated via composite reliability. Hair et al. (2010), mentioned that composite reliability serves as a standard for evaluating the internal consistency of a measure, and it should be higher than 0.70. It is evident in Table 1, that all of the

construct's composite reliability values go above the minimally satisfactory level of 0.70, proving that the construct's internal consistency has been established. Moreover, using variance analysis, we verified the convergent validity (was more significant than 0.5) as suggested by (Hair et al., 2014). Similarly, the convergent validity of the study was evaluated through the average variance extracted method. The data in Table 1, show that all constructions have AVE values above the threshold of 0.50, which supports the validity of the convergent hypothesis. Cronbach's alpha value was above 0.7, confirming the scale's general reliability.



**Figure 3 CFA Analysis for Foundation of Green Consumption Behavior**

We tested our scale's validity and reliability using factor loadings, composite reliability, and variance analysis. The outcomes show that it meets the requirements. Discriminant validity is the next thing that needs to be confirmed. We used the (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), criterion, a very acceptable set of criteria, for our discriminant validity analysis. The findings summarized in Table 2, demonstrated that, the discriminant validity of the latent variables is presented in Table 2, GM, ENAW, ENVC, CT and GCB have the diagonal values consisting of the square root of average

variance extracted (AVE) of 0.750, 0.756, 0.735, 0.741 and 0.741. All of these values are higher than the off-diagonal correlations, indicating discriminant validity. For example, distinctness is maintained with AVE for GM enabling the correlation to be 0.680 and square root of AVE for GM of 0.756. ENAW also exhibits the same correlation of 0.530 with GM, while the root mean square correlation error lies at 0.735. The values shows that each latent variable is distinct and has the discriminant validity.

**Table 2 Discriminant Validity**

Latent variables	CT	GM	ENAW	ENVC	GCB
CT	<b>0.750</b>				
GM	0.680	<b>0.756</b>			
ENAW	0.691	0.530	<b>0.735</b>		
ENVC	0.541	0.617	0.670	<b>0.741</b>	
GCB	0.635	0.607	0.535	0.622	<b>0.741</b>

Note: Green Marketing (GM), Environmental Awareness (ENAW), Environmental Concern (ENVC), Customer Trust (CT), Green Consumption Behavior (GCB)

#### 4.2 Hypothesis Testing

These structural evaluation indexes for model fit assessment are presented in Table 3. All the CFI (0.979 > 0.90), GFI (0.954 > 0.80), RMR (0.041 < 0.08), RMSEA (0.039 < 0.06) and CMIN/DF (1.851 < 5.0) all satisfy their cut-off values from benchmark studies. The model fit is confirmed by these results.

**Table 3 Indexes for Structural Evaluation for Goodness of Fit Evaluation**

Indexes	Measured value	Cut-off-value	Benchmark studies	Decision
<b>CFI</b>	0.979	> 0.90	(Bentler, 1990)	Satisfactory
<b>GFI</b>	0.954	> 0.80	(Hu & Bentler, 1995)	Satisfactory
<b>RMR</b>	0.041	< 0.08	(Byrne, 2013)	Satisfactory
<b>RMSEA</b>	0.039	< 0.06	(MacCallum et al., 1996)	Satisfactory
<b>CMIN/DF</b>	1.851	< 5.0	(Hair Jr et al., 2017)	Satisfactory

Note: Green Marketing (GM), Environmental Awareness (ENAW), Environmental Concern (ENVC), Customer Trust (CT), Green Consumption Behavior (GCB)

Examining the causal relations is the next step after evaluating the model specification to test the hypothesis. Ten hypotheses have been put up for this study. Six hypothesis were used to show direct linkages, and the other four were used to check indirect relationship and shown in Table 3.3. The role of the mediating variable is of significant importance to business management experts for estimating the indirect relationships between the variables. The direct and indirect relationships between the variables were evaluated in this study using structural equation modeling (SEM). To analyze mediation, a bootstrap methodology with 5000 bootstrap samples was used. The common direct impact is described in Figure 4 and Table 4.

Table 4 describes standardized regression weights ( $\beta$ ), standard errors (SE), critical ratios (CR) values, p-values and decisions in relationship to each hypothesis are shown. The empirical support for Hypothesis H1, stating the relationship between Green Marketing (GM) and Customer Trust (CT). The  $\beta=0.607$  shows a positive relationship, meaning as a company engages in green

marketing practices, the customer's trust in its environmental claims goes up (Garg, 2015). The p-value of 0.000 shows this relationship as statistically significant at 0.001 significant level. Therefore, H1 is accepted. The H2 was developed on the basis of association between Environmental Awareness (ENAW) and Environmental Concern (ENVC). The  $\beta$  value of 1.002 indicates strong positive relations between environmental awareness and concern. The p-value corresponding to this value is 0.000, which denotes the strong significance of this relationship and emphasizes the importance of awareness on environmental issues (Zameer & Yasmeen, 2022a). Therefore, H2 is also accepted. The hypothesis 3 was developed on the basis of relationship between GM and ENVC. The  $\beta$  coefficient value (0.188) indicates a positive impact of green marketing on environmental concern. It does also appear that green marketing initiatives drive consumer environmental concern with a p-value of 0.004, showing the statistical significance of this relation. Therefore, H3 is accepted. Similarly, H4 examines the link between ENAW and CT. The statistical evidence illustrates the acceptance of this relationship. The  $\beta$  value of 0.382 confirms a positive relationship indicating that if environmental awareness increases, so does customer trust in that brand. A p-value of 0.000 indicates that awareness has a significant impact on building customer trust. Furthermore, H5 examines the role of customer trust in influencing green consumption behavior (GCB). The positive  $\beta$  value of 0.279 suggests that trust influences consumers to some extent toward green behavior. A p-value of 0.000 adds further confidence that the relationship is statistically significant, emphasizing trust development needed for sustainable purchasing decisions. Therefore, hypothesis H5 is accepted based on the statistical results. Finally, based on the relationship between ENVC and GCB, H6 hypothesis was developed. The results indicate that ENVC significantly influences the green consumption behavior with the  $\beta = 0.678$ . This indicates that the more the consumers concern themselves about environmental issues, the more likely they tend to adopt pro-environmental behaviors, for instance, the consumption of green products. The relationship is validated with  $p = 000$ , asserting that concern is an important predictor of green consumption. Therefore. H6 is accepted.

**Table 4 Testing the Hypotheses**

Hypotheses	Relationship	$\beta$	SE	CR-values	p-values	Decision
<b>H1</b>	GM $\rightarrow$ CT	0.607	0.064	9.503	0.000	Accepted
<b>H2</b>	ENAW $\rightarrow$ ENVC	1.002	0.103	9.749	0.000	Accepted
<b>H3</b>	GM $\rightarrow$ ENVC	0.188	0.065	2.871	0.004	Accepted
<b>H4</b>	ENAW $\rightarrow$ CT	0.382	0.076	5.084	0.000	Accepted
<b>H5</b>	CT $\rightarrow$ GCB	0.279	0.080	3.486	0.000	Accepted
<b>H6</b>	ENVC $\rightarrow$ GCB	0.678	0.083	8.160	0.000	Accepted

*Note: Green Marketing (GM), Environmental Awareness (ENAW), Environmental Concern (ENVC), Customer Trust (CT), Green Consumption Behavior (GCB)*

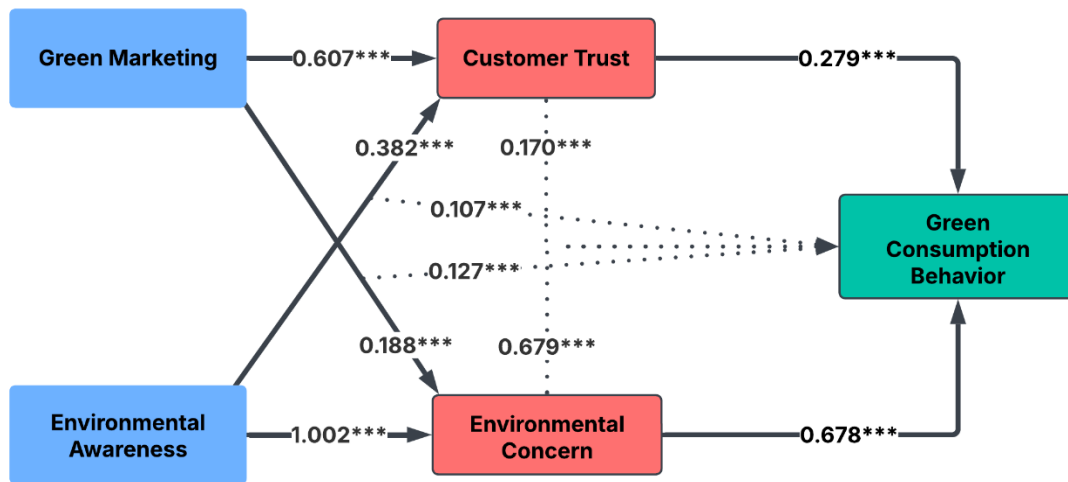
The following step is to look at mediation after testing the direct-effect hypothesis. We used the identical method to assess the mediation effects in this work; following the findings of Zameer et al. (2020), Table 5 summarizes the outcomes of the mediation analysis. The mediation analysis provides further insight into the mechanisms through which green marketing (GM) and environmental awareness (ENAW) influence green consumption behavior (GCB) via customer trust (CT) and environmental concern (ENVC). The significance of these mediating relationships

suggests that green marketing and environmental awareness do not always lead directly to green consumption but rather function through trust-building and concern-raising mechanisms. The mediating effects in the model are considered in Table 3.5. Moreover, Hypothesis H7 concerning the indirect effect of Green Marketing (GM) on Green Consumption Behavior (GCB) through Customer Trust (CT). The outcomes indicate ( $\beta=0.170$ ;  $p=0.025$ ), showing customer trust acts as a mediator between the influence of green marketing on the green consumption behavior. For instance, green marketing influences customer trust and customer trust then strengthening the green consumption behavior. This finding supports the idea that consumers do not respond positively to green marketing unless they trust the environmental commitments by the brand. Hence, green marketing plays a crucial role in building trust that in turn acts to drive sustainable consumption. Also, H8 was developed to show the mediation of Environmental Awareness (ENAW) on GCB through the Environmental Concern (ENVC). The statistical evidence ( $\beta$  value = 0.679 and  $p$ -value = 0.001) confirm that environmental concern (ENVC) acts as a strong mediator between environmental awareness (ENAW) and green consumption behavior (GCB). Awareness increases concern, while the concern motivates consumer behavior.

This outcome reveals that just having knowledge is not sufficient for taking action Consumers must feel a pronounced emotional connection to environmental issues in order to make consistent green buying choices. Hypothesis H9, the mediating role of CT in the relationship between ENAW and GCB is accepted based statistical evidence ( $\beta = 0.107$  and  $p$ -value = 0.017). The results explains that customer trust is a significant mediator in the relationship between environmental awareness and green consumption behavior. This means environmental awareness stimulates customer trust in environmentally responsible brands, while trust becomes a key determinant of purchasing behavior. Customer trust for companies aligned with their values results as a wider bridge for sustainable consumption. Hypothesis 10 (H10) was developed to signify the mediation relation of environmental concern between green marketing and green consumption behavior. The results demonstrates a significant acceptance of indirect effect ( $\beta = 0.278$ ,  $p$ -value = 0.000). The evidence suggests that while green marketing increases concern about sustainability, it is ultimately the increase in concern that leads to behavior change. This highlights the role of marketing in not just promoting green products but also shaping consumer attitudes toward environmental responsibility. The result is that all the hypotheses are accepted and that the critical mediating pathways in the model is confirmed.

**Table 5 Mediating Impact**

Hypotheses	Relationship	$\beta$	SE values	P -value	Decision
<b>H7</b>	GM → CT → GCB	0.170	0.084	0.025	Accepted
<b>H8</b>	ENAW → ENVC → GCB	0.679	0.137	0.001	Accepted
<b>H9</b>	ENAW → CT → GCB	0.107	0.059	0.017	Accepted
<b>H10</b>	GM → ENVC → GCB	0.127	0.068	0.029	Accepted



Note: \*\*\* indicates the Significance Level at 0.001 and 0.0005

**Figure 4 Estimated Path Model for Foundation of Green Consumption Behavior**

### 5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

The present study offers an insightful account of the mechanisms underlying GCB by considering the roles of GM, ENAW, CT, and ENVC. Building from the existing literature, this study not only analyses the direct effects of green marketing and environmental awareness on green consumption behavior, but also discerns the psychological pathways through which these effects are mediated. The results signify that whereas corporations and consumers can take advantage of green marketing strategies and awareness-building initiatives to consider sustainable consumption, the trust and concern of consumers serves as essential psychological drivers that transform these efforts into action. If the mediators are not there, marketing campaigns and awareness efforts might enhance consumer knowledge, but behavioral change may still be out of reach.

One of the most important findings is that green marketing significantly increases customer trust, thereby confirming that companies adopting transparent and ethical sustainability practices are perceived by consumers as being more credible. Trust subsequently facilitates more sustainable consumer behavior by helping reduce skepticism and increasing confidence in the eco-friendly option available to the consumer. But marketing alone does not ensure green consumption unless it builds trust that then acts as an assurance mechanism for consumers evaluating green claims. The results of our study are consistent with prior research, arguing sustainable branding and ethical practices build customer trust (Tanveer et al., 2021). Moreover, (Shafiee & Shahin, 2021) reached similar conclusions that green marketing strategies, like pricing mix develop trust among customers. Moreover, the study found that environmental awareness influences environmental concern. It indicates that people become decidedly more concerned and emotionally committed to the issue of sustainability. Moreover, awareness becomes the trigger, while concern becomes the driving force toward taking some form of action. However, this rises the confusion of whether knowledge to environmental information is enough or consumers must also internalize the issue and feel a personal sense of responsibility to engage in sustainable consumption. The results of this study are aligned with the study of Zameer and Yasmeen (2022a), who argued that

environmental awareness reinforces the customer concern about environmental issues. Similarly, dos Santos Leite Gonella et al. (2024), found that environmental awareness serves as a precursor of concern to connect the cognitive understanding of the sustainability to the emotional engagement with it.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes that green marketing has a favorable impact on environmental concern, providing evidence that efficient marketing has the potential to mold consumer attitudes in respect to sustainability. Furthermore, it asserts that organizations that communicate their activities regarding sustainability can shape consumer considerations on environmental responsibility. According to the study of Mudrika et al. (2024), green marketing influences the social and environmental concern among customer that results in social responsibility. Therefore, awareness fosters concern through cognitive learning, marketing plays a role by making sustainability more relatable and engaging, which, in turn, strengthens consumer commitment to green behaviors.

The present study also confirms that the awareness for the environment builds trust. More informed buyer would most likely have trust in brands that meet their sustainability values. As consumers become more aware of environmental issues, they are more critical of their purchase decisions, favoring brands that show a real commitment to environmental issues. The results are aligned with the study of Kikuchi-Uehara et al. (2016), who found customer having awareness of green brand, trusts only those products that have third party verified labels on the product's information page. Therefore, awareness and trust together facilitates green consumption.

The outcomes of the study also show that both customer trust (CT) and environmental concern do play mediating roles in customer green consumption behavior (GCB). Both constructs have significantly positive influence on sustainable choices while their influences are of different magnitude and nature. The study found that customer trust has a positive influence on green consumption behavior. The results are consistent with the study of (Saif et al., 2023); the results found that customer trust works as a driver of green consumption behavior. Moreover, the direct effect of environmental concern on green consumption behavior was examined and it is found that environmental concern is one of the most consistent predictor of pro environmental behavior (Bamberg & Möser, 2007). These insights are further extended with results of significant mediating mechanisms. The indirect effect of green marketing on green consumption behavior through customer trust implies that besides marketing, customer trust also indirectly fosters green behavior among consumers. The finding supports Yadav et al. (2019), which showed that trust acts as a mediator in the green marketing effort, sustainable consumption process. Moreover, the mediating role of environmental concern between environmental awareness and green consumption behavior further illustrates environmental concern's intermediary nature in converting awareness into action. The study of (Fenitra et al., 2022) for environmental concern mediating the awareness and consumption behavior relationship across different cultural contexts. For instance, the mediation of ENVC between GM and GCB signifies green marketing that intensifies environmental concern and leads to sustainable consumption. Kao and Du (2020), also believe that green marketing campaigns not only inform consumers but also elicit emotional

reactions to further increase the ecological commitments of consumers as well. Moreover, the relatively weaker mediating role of CT (ENAW - CT - GCB,  $\beta = 0.112$ ,  $p = 0.014$ ) suggests that trust is not enough, and other strategies should consider stronger psychological drivers (e.g., Environmental concern). This seems to argue in support of Pontes et al. (2024), which argues that there is partial effect of trust between intrinsic motivators, like values toward the environment, and green behavior. Together, these findings highlight cognition, affect, and behavior are coherently intertwined to promote green consumption.

## 6. Conclusion

This chapter provides a contribution to the understanding of green consumption behavior by exploring green marketing and environmental awareness serve as foundational drivers for sustainable consumer choices. Green marketing is positioned as a strategic tool that not only communicates the environmental benefits of products but also fosters customer trust. It emphasizes the importance of transparent, credible, and consistent marketing practices in influencing consumer perceptions and encouraging pro-environmental purchasing decisions. Businesses that effectively utilize green marketing strategies, such as eco-labeling and honest sustainability messaging, enhances their reputation and align their actions with consumer values. Similarly, environmental awareness is highlighted as a key factor in helping consumers recognize and understand pressing ecological challenges, such as climate change and resource depletion. Awareness acts as the cognitive foundation that informs consumers about the importance of sustainability and sets the stage for behavioral change. Together, green marketing and environmental awareness emphasize the interplay between consumer knowledge, trust, and actions, forming the basis of sustainable consumption.

An important contribution of this paper is the identification of customer trust and environmental concern as critical mediating factors in the transition from awareness to actionable green behaviors. Customer trust reduces perceived risks, such as skepticism about product efficacy or corporate greenwashing, and simplifies decision-making by providing assurance about the authenticity of sustainability claims. However, trust alone is not sufficient as a motivator for green consumption. This research highlights the complementary role of environmental concern, which bridges cognitive understanding with emotional engagement. Environmental concern drives deeper commitments by connecting consumer's values with their desire to address environmental issues, resulting in more consistent and meaningful green behaviors

## Contribution

**Saad Saif:** Problem Identification and Theoretical Framework

**Kiran Bano:** Data Analysis, Supervision and Drafting

Conflict of Interests/Disclosures

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest in this article's research, authorship, and publication.

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