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Environmental Consciousness and Purchase Intention for Sustainable Eco-Friendly Pants

Evidence from Business Students in a Non-Sectarian University

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how environmental consciousness influences the purchase intention of sustainable eco-friendly pants among Marketing Management students at the National University–Manila. To determine the relationship between environmental consciousness and purchase intention, focusing on how knowledge, concern, values, attitudes, and perceived consumer effectiveness affect students' decisions to buy sustainable apparel. The study employed a quantitative-descriptive and correlational research design using a structured questionnaire. A total of 267 Marketing Management students from the National University–Manila participated. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, Pearson Chi-Square, and Pearson correlation. Findings revealed that students have a high level of environmental consciousness and strong purchase intention toward eco-friendly pants. A significant positive relationship exists between environmental consciousness and purchase intention. Students with greater environmental awareness are more inclined to purchase sustainable products, confirming that environmental consciousness directly influences green consumer behavior. Educational institutions, businesses, and policymakers may develop sustainability programs, green marketing strategies, and fashion campaigns to encourage eco-friendly consumer practices among students.

Keywords
Environmental
Consciousness
Eco-Friendly Pants
Fashion Industry
Green Marketing
Purchase Intention

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Introduction

The fashion industry, while recognized for its creativity and economic contribution, has become one of the major contributors to global environmental degradation. The rise of fast fashion has intensified issues such as textile waste, water pollution, excessive carbon emissions, and unsustainable consumption patterns. Recent studies emphasize that millions of tons of textile waste are produced annually, with a large proportion ending up in landfills and causing long-term environmental harm [1]. As awareness of environmental problems increases, consumers are gradually shifting toward sustainable consumption practices, particularly in the apparel sector. In the Philippines, approximately 75% of consumers reportedly prefer sustainable brands, demonstrating growing public concern regarding environmental sustainability and ethical consumption [2]. This trend indicates that environmental awareness has become an important determinant of purchasing behavior, especially among younger generations who are more exposed to sustainability campaigns and environmental education.

Environmental consciousness refers to an individual's awareness, concern, and commitment toward protecting the environment through responsible attitudes and behaviors [3]. Previous research has shown that environmental consciousness significantly influences green purchasing behavior and consumer decision-making [4], [5]. Consumers who possess higher environmental awareness are more likely to support eco-friendly products, including sustainable apparel and organic clothing [6], [7]. Moreover, environmental education and exposure to sustainability-related information positively shape pro-environmental attitudes among students and young consumers [8], [9]. University students, particularly those enrolled in business and marketing-related programs, are considered an important demographic because they are future professionals and consumers who may influence sustainable business practices in society.

Several studies have examined the relationship between environmental concern and green purchase intention. Research conducted among university students revealed that environmental consumption consciousness strongly correlates with environmentally responsible purchasing behavior [10]. Similarly, environmental concern and perceived consumer effectiveness were found to enhance purchase intention toward eco-friendly

apparel products [11]. Studies in Vietnam and other developing countries also demonstrated that Generation Z consumers tend to prefer sustainable products when they possess strong environmental consciousness and social responsibility values [12], [13]. In the Philippine context, sustainable purchasing behavior has increasingly attracted scholarly attention due to changing consumer lifestyles and rising environmental issues [14]. Filipino consumers, especially younger generations, are becoming more socially oriented and emotionally engaged in purchasing eco-friendly apparel products [15].

Despite the growing body of literature on sustainable fashion and green consumption, there remains a significant gap in studies focusing on specific apparel categories such as eco-friendly pants. Most previous research has concentrated on sustainable fashion in general rather than examining how environmental consciousness affects the purchase intention of particular clothing items. Understanding this relationship is important because consumer preferences may vary depending on the type of apparel product being purchased. Sustainable pants, for example, may involve considerations related to comfort, durability, style, and environmental impact simultaneously.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the influence of environmental consciousness on the purchase intention of sustainable eco-friendly pants among Marketing Management students at National University. By identifying how environmental awareness shapes purchasing intentions, the study seeks to contribute to the existing literature on sustainable fashion consumption and green marketing. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for educational institutions, policymakers, and fashion businesses in designing strategies that encourage environmentally responsible consumer behavior. Furthermore, this research supports the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production and SDG 13 on climate action, by promoting sustainable purchasing practices among young consumers.

Literature Review

A. Relationship of the Demographics and Environmental Consciousness

Several studies demonstrate that demographic factors such as education, income, and gender influence environmental consciousness and behavior. Echavarren [16] identified consistent gender differences, with women more likely to display pro-environmental attitudes, although the underlying causes remain undetermined. Wetering et al. [8] showed that environmental consciousness improves students' environmental knowledge, attitudes, intentions, and behaviors. The researchers found that higher education, higher income, and full employment status are strong predictors of environmental concern and responsible behavior. In urban populations, higher income and education levels correlate with increased environmental awareness [17]. Never and Albert [14] observed that while wealth and

environmental concern affect self-reported eco-friendly actions, these factors do not always influence daily behaviors, although they still contribute to pro-environmental tendencies. Conversely, other studies do not identify significant relationships between certain demographic variables and environmental consciousness. Özdemir and Güler [10] found that student age does not significantly affect environmental consciousness or behavior, although there is a slight increase in environmentally responsible behavior with age. Huluka [18] reported no statistically significant difference in environmental awareness between women and men. Baliya et al. [9] found no significant differences in environmental consciousness based on locale and/or educational attainment, with students generally demonstrating moderate environmental consciousness. Gül [19] similarly observed no significant difference in environmental awareness among various household income groups.

B. Relationship of the Demographics and Purchase Intention

Gender, age, education, and financial ability have been widely examined in relation to environmental consciousness and sustainable purchasing behavior. Lee [6] found that female college students were more environmentally conscious and more willing to pay for eco-friendly apparel than their male counterparts. Similarly, Mataracı and Kurtuluş [3] reported that women tend to demonstrate stronger behavioral engagement in sustainability-oriented fashion. In contrast, Souza et al. [20] found that gender was not a significant predictor of purchase intention for remanufactured products. Regarding age, Kumar et al. [11] determined that age was not a significant determinant of eco-friendly apparel purchase intention among educated Indian youths, whose intentions were more strongly influenced by environmental concern and personal moral norms. Conversely, Bajar et al. [12] found that younger Generation Z consumers in Vietnam exhibited stronger green consumption intentions than older groups, attributed to heightened awareness of climate issues. Education and financial capability are also important factors in sustainable purchasing behavior. Arslan et al. [4] found that higher education levels support more environmentally conscious purchasing. Education increases knowledge and awareness, which improve attitudes and intentions toward green products. However, Wang et al. [21] noted that education alone does not guarantee eco-conscious behavior without practical experience. Hasan et al. [7] showed that financial ability and affordability significantly affect willingness to buy organic cotton clothing in Bangladesh. In contrast, Lee [6] argued that environmental consciousness, rather than financial means, is the main driver of students' willingness to pay for green apparel. Overall, these studies suggest that demographic factors influence environmental consciousness and purchase intentions, but their impact varies by cultural, social, and economic context.

C. Relationship of Environmental Consciousness and Purchase Intention

Relationship between environmental consciousness and the purchase intention for sustainable eco-friendly pants. Consumer behavior toward eco-friendly products has been widely examined across various contexts, emphasizing the role of environmental consciousness shaping their purchase intentions. Mishal et al. [5] found that environmental consciousness has a positive influence on green purchase behavior and attitude. Similarly, Lin and Niu [22] emphasized that environmental knowledge and consciousness significantly affect purchasing behavior toward green products. However, Souza et al. [20] observed only moderate associations, suggesting that factors such as risk perception and consumer attitude can weaken the direct effect of environmental consciousness on purchase intention. In addition, Dionela et al. [23] examined the environmental awareness and personal engagement of individuals, as well as their influence on consumption behavior towards green goods in Metro Manila. The study indicates that awareness in the Philippines is not enough. People need to be engaged and interested so that awareness can be translated into action. These studies collectively highlight that while environmental consciousness and knowledge encourage sustainable behavior, engagement and motivation are essential for awareness to lead to actual purchase behavior. Likewise, Bajar et al. [13] stated that the behavior of Gen Z consumers regarding sustainable purchasing is primarily influenced by concerns for the environment, social media, the firm's reputation, and price. The research indicated that a significant number of Gen Z consumers are willing to buy eco-friendly products. However, the price of such a product is very often a considerable obstacle, and most consumers do not consider paying a premium price worthwhile. Similarly, Valentin et al. [24] recognized that sustainable clothing purchase behavior, even in a developing economy, is influenced by generational gaps. Younger consumers, primarily members of Generation Z and Millennials, are more likely to engage in eco-friendly buying than older generations. Lansang and Dimaculangan [25] found that environmental concern is a major predictor of attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and, hence, purchase intention. Authors have also found that consumption values, namely conditional (practical value such as discount or convenience) and epistemic values (novelty appeal or curiosity), contribute significantly towards their effect on intention. Lastly, according to Alvaro et al. [15], Filipino consumers' purchase intentions for eco-friendly clothing and apparel are influenced by both social and emotional considerations.

Material and Methods

Fig. 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of the study. Environmental consciousness, consisting of environmental knowledge, concern, values, attitudes toward eco-friendly clothing, and perceived consumer effectiveness, is proposed to influence purchase intention

toward sustainable eco-friendly pants. Demographic variables, including age, sex, year level, and estimated monthly allowance, also contribute to purchasing intention.

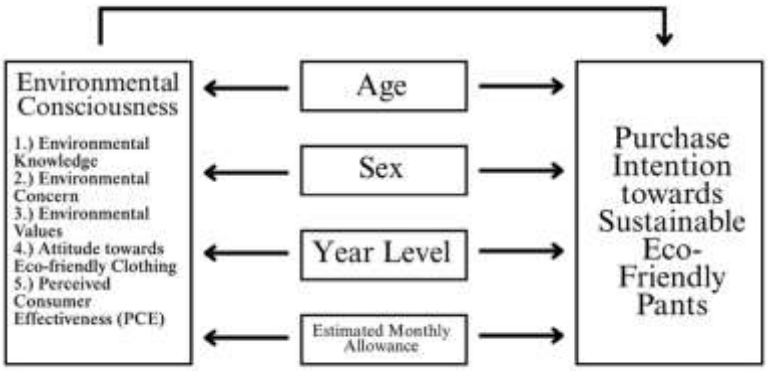


Fig. 1. Research Paradigm

The study used a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to determine the relationship between environmental consciousness and purchase intention for sustainable eco-friendly pants. The respondents were 267 BSBA Marketing Management students from the National University – Manila, representing all year levels (1st to 4th year).

This number corresponds to the recommended sample size based on a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error from a total population of 870 students, achieving a 100% response rate since all intended respondents completed the survey. The researchers used proportionate stratified random sampling to ensure fair representation of students across all year levels. Each year level was treated as a stratum, and a proportional sample was drawn based on its population size. A structured questionnaire was used, divided into four parts: (1) informed consent, (2) demographic profile, (3) environmental consciousness (knowledge, concern, values, attitude, perceived consumer effectiveness), and (4) purchase intention. Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

The instrument's reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a coefficient of ≥ 0.90, which indicates excellent internal consistency and reliability of the adapted questionnaire. The researchers sought formal permission from the Dean of the College of Business and Accountancy and distributed the survey both online via Google Forms and in person to ensure higher response rates. An informed consent statement was included to guarantee voluntary participation and confidentiality.

Data collection was conducted during the first semester of Academic Year 2024–2025, throughout the month of September, both during class hours and through online survey distribution. The data were collected within the National University – Manila, particularly

among students from the College of Business and Accountancy located in the Annex II (Mendiola) campus. Data were gathered through a Google Forms survey disseminated via institutional emails and student organizations, and through face-to-face administration within the campus. The study applied various statistical tools for data analysis. Frequency and percentage described the respondents' demographic profile, while Cronbach's Alpha confirmed the reliability of the questionnaire. Weighted mean measured the levels of environmental consciousness and purchase intention. To test relationships, the Pearson Chi-Square determined the significance between demographics and variables, and the Pearson Correlation Coefficient identified the strength of the relationship between environmental consciousness and purchase intention.

Results and Discussions

Table 1 presents the summary of relationships between the variables tested in the study. The table includes the computed correlation coefficient (r-value), p-value, and corresponding remarks indicating the significance of the relationship between environmental consciousness variables and purchase intention toward sustainable eco-friendly pants. The results determine whether the tested relationships are statistically significant.

Table 1. Summary of Relationships

Variables Tested	r-value	p-value	Remarks
Environmental Consciousness (EC) to Age	–	0.313	No Significant Relationship
Environmental Consciousness (EC) to Sex	–	0.012	Significant Relationship
Environmental Consciousness (EC) to Year Level	–	0.031	Significant Relationship
Environmental Consciousness (EC) to Allowance	–	0.005	Significant Relationship
Purchase Intention (PI) to Age	–	0.822	No Significant Relationship
Purchase Intention (PI) to Sex	–	0.033	Significant Relationship
Purchase Intention (PI) to Year Level	–	0.050	Significant Relationship
Purchase Intention (PI) to Allowance	–	0.004	Significant Relationship
Environmental Consciousness (EC) to Purchase Intention (PI)	0.718	0.000	Significant Positive Relationship

For the results for Environmental Consciousness (EC) and Purchase Intention (PI) to Demographics, EC and PI both have a significant relationship with Sex (p=0.012), Year Level (p=0.031), and Allowance (p=0.005), indicating that environmental consciousness and their intent to purchase are more significantly shaped by socioeconomic and educational variables. Specifically, factors such as gender (female students), academic seniority (higher-year students), and financial resources (higher allowances) correlate with heightened environmental awareness. This suggests that both exposure and resources are key determinants in cultivating a sustainable mindset and their intent to purchase. Both EC and PI to Age (p=0.313), on the other hand, have no significant relationship, indicating that regardless

of age differences among respondents, whether they are 18 or above 24 years old, students demonstrate similar levels of environmental awareness and willingness to purchase sustainable, eco-friendly pants. The results for Environmental Consciousness (EC) and Purchase Intention (PI) show that there is a Significant Positive Relationship between them, as indicated by a strong correlation coefficient (r=0.718) and a highly significant p-value (p=0.000). This suggests that an increase in environmental consciousness is associated with a corresponding increase in purchase intention.

Table 2 presents the hypothesis testing results of the study. It shows the statistical test used to examine the relationships between variables, along with the computed r-values and p-values. The table also indicates the decision to accept or reject each hypothesis and provides interpretations regarding the significance and strength of the relationships identified.

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Statistical Test Used	r-value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
H1	Pearson Chi-Square	–	0.005	Reject H_0	There is a significant relationship between environmental consciousness and demographic variables.
H2	Pearson Chi-Square	–	0.004	Reject H_0	There is a significant relationship between purchase intention and demographic variables.
H3	Pearson Correlation	0.718	0.000	Reject H_0	There is a strong positive correlation between environmental consciousness and purchase intention.

In Hypothesis 1 (H1), the relationship between environmental consciousness and demographic variables was tested using the Pearson Chi-Square test. The resulting p-value of 0.005 is below the typical significance level (α=0.05), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0). This indicates that environmental consciousness does vary significantly across different demographic groups. Then, in Hypothesis 2 (H2), the relationship between purchase intention and demographic variables was also tested using the Pearson Chi-Square test. The p-value of 0.004 is below the typical significance level; the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, indicating that purchase intention does vary significantly across different demographic groups. This suggests a significant relationship exists between purchase intention and demographic variables. Lastly, in Hypothesis 3 (H3), the correlation between environmental consciousness and purchase intention was assessed with Pearson Correlation. The test yielded a correlation coefficient (r-value) of 0.718 and an extremely low p-value of 0.000. Based on the low p-value, the null hypothesis was rejected. The r-value of 0.718 suggests a strong positive correlation, meaning that as environmental consciousness increases, purchase intention tends to grow as well.

Fig. 2 presents the research paradigm with numerical figures showing the

relationships among the study variables. Environmental consciousness demonstrated a strong positive relationship with purchase intention toward sustainable eco-friendly pants (0.718). Meanwhile, demographic variables such as age, sex, year level, and estimated monthly allowance showed varying levels of association with both environmental consciousness and purchase intention.

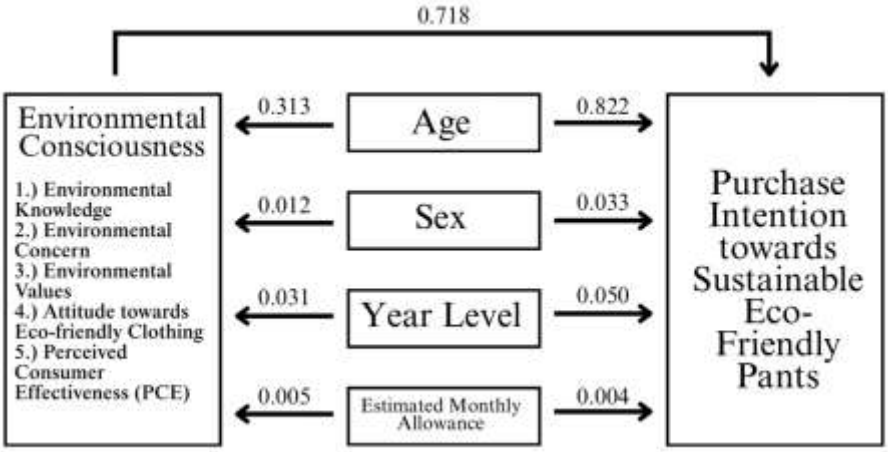


Fig. 2. Research Paradigm with Numerical Figures

Discussion

The results revealed that age (p-value=0.313.) has no statistically significant relationship with environmental consciousness. This finding supports [10], who stated that the age of the students did not make a significant difference in the level of environmental consciousness and behavior, but the behavior towards environmental problems did increase slightly with age. Meanwhile, sex (p-value = 0.012), year level (p-value=0.031), and monthly allowance (p-value = 0.005) showed statistically significant relationships with environmental consciousness. This aligns with Echavarren's study [16], which found that they have consistently found differences between men and women, whereby women are more likely to display pro-environmental attitudes, although the underlying reasons remain largely unclear. Similarly, Watering et al. [8] demonstrate the potential for environmental education to improve students' environmental knowledge, attitudes, intentions, and behavior. Education increases pro-environmental behavior.

In addition, Alam and Zakaria [17] noted that the estimated results of OPM reveal the dominance of higher education, higher income, and full-employment status on environmental concern and environmentally responsible behavior. Higher income and higher education predict greater environmental awareness in their urban samples.

Findings showed that age (p-value= 0.822) has no statistically significant relationship with purchase intention. These support Kumar et al. [11], who found that age was not a

significant determinant of eco-friendly apparel purchase intention among educated Indian youths, as their intentions were influenced more by environmental concern and personal moral norms. However, sex (p-value = 0.033), year level (p-value= 0.050), and monthly allowance (p-value= 0.004) were found to have statistically significant relationships with purchase intention. This is consistent with Lee et al. [6], who reported that female college students were more environmentally conscious and more willing to pay for eco-friendly apparel than males. Likewise, Mataracı and Kurtuluş [3] observed that women tend to display stronger behavioral engagement in sustainability-oriented fashion.

Furthermore, Arslan et al. [4] stated that education level has a positive influence on environmentally conscious purchasing behavior. As consumers gain more knowledge and awareness through education, their environmental attitudes and purchasing intentions also improve. Lastly, Hasan et al. [7] found that financial ability and product affordability significantly affect willingness to purchase organic cotton clothing in Bangladesh.

The analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between environmental consciousness and purchase intention ($r = 0.718$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that higher environmental awareness leads to stronger purchase intentions toward sustainable eco-friendly pants. This supports Mishal et al. [5], who found that "environmental consciousness positively influences green purchase behavior and attitude." Likewise, Lin and Niu [22] emphasized that "environmental knowledge and consciousness significantly affect purchasing behavior toward green products."

Conclusion

Environmental consciousness is more significantly shaped by socioeconomic and educational variables than by age. Specifically, factors such as gender (female students), academic seniority (higher-year students), and greater financial resources (higher allowances) correlate with heightened environmental awareness. This indicates that both exposure and resources are key determinants in cultivating a sustainable mindset. Intent to purchase sustainable apparel is not uniform across the student population, varying instead based on demographics. The stronger purchasing propensity found among female students and those with higher financial resources underscores that gender and economic ability are key variables influencing commitment to eco-friendly fashion. A significant conclusion is that a strong, positive correlation exists between environmental consciousness and the intention to purchase among the marketing student population. Since greater environmental knowledge, concern, and positive attitudes directly lead to a higher likelihood of buying sustainable apparel, the findings reinforce the need for educational and marketing strategies that prioritize the development of heightened environmental awareness.

Consumers may consider practicing sustainable fashion by supporting eco-friendly

brands, purchasing thrifted or upcycled clothing, and making mindful buying decisions. They may also develop habits that promote sustainability as part of their daily lifestyle to help reduce clothing waste. The community may revisit and re-implement its existing sustainability initiatives to further strengthen student and staff participation. It may also consider introducing green marketing electives that emphasize sustainable and responsible consumption, aligning academic learning with real-world environmental practices. The business sector may develop marketing strategies and eco-friendly product lines that appeal to environmentally conscious consumers. It may also consider promoting transparency in sourcing and production to build trust and loyalty among customers. The government may consider creating and strengthening policies that promote sustainable fashion and responsible consumption. It may also develop awareness campaigns and incentives for businesses that use eco-friendly materials to support the country's sustainability goals. To gain more perspective, future researchers may study a broader population, including students from other universities or disciplines, to validate and compare findings. They may also consider examining other factors, such as cultural values or social influence, that affect eco-friendly purchase intentions.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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