



The effect of green purchase intention on emerging market consumers' clothing purchase behaviour in South Africa

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of the green purchase intention of emerging market consumers on their green purchase behaviour in South Africa. The calls by the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for consumers and organizations to act and behave sustainably have generated much interest in green consumer behaviour. In SA, calls have also been made for clothing companies to create awareness about the impact of clothing buyer behaviour on the environment. Organizations should also enhance consumer knowledge of their green buying behaviour and the effect this has on the environment. A survey was conducted online among the emerging consumers in Soweto, Johannesburg, targeting 300 respondents. The results confirmed that environmental knowledge and social/peer influence have an impact on green purchase intention and that green purchase intention does influence consumer behaviour. The effect of green purchase intention on green clothing behaviour was found to be higher than the effect of environmental knowledge and social/peer pressure on purchase intention. Clothing firms and policymakers should focus on raising awareness, disseminating information, and using peer pressure to enhance customers' inclination to make environmentally friendly purchases. This, in turn, will impact the buying behaviour of consumers in emerging markets.

Contribution/Originality: This study makes a contribution to the purchase behaviour literature by focusing on the consumers in the emerging market of SA, especially those leaving in previously disadvantaged areas, which are known as townships. This particular group of consumers has largely been ignored by studies focusing on green consumer behaviour.

1. INTRODUCTION

The South African clothing industry is one of the country's biggest markets (Van Den Berg, 2017) and has been growing as a result of the shopping centre expansion in the country (Euromonitor, 2015). The influx of foreign clothing companies into the South African market has also contributed to this growth. More and more global online clothing retailers have also entered the market, most of which specialise in fast-fashion products. Because of fast fashion, nearly 20% of all textile products result in waste, which increases the environmental footprint of clothing products (Niinimäki et al., 2020). Globally, clothing companies are under severe pressure due to environmental pollution and other issues such as the exploitation of workers – factors that have influenced consumer behaviour towards products that are not environmentally compliant (Makhitha, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic had a marked impact on South Africa's clothing industry, with major retail companies reducing their reliance on imported goods and increasing local sourcing by committing to increase locally made clothing ranges from the current 50% to 65% of the market by 2030 (Research and Markets, 2021). However, South African clothing demand fell by 6.9% overall during 2020, owing to the negative impact of the pandemic on the industry (News24, 2021).

Niinimäki (2010) defines green clothing as products that have been designed to last for a lifetime, that are produced using ethical production systems, and that are also made locally, resulting in little or no environmental impact. The growing awareness of environmental issues has led to consumer demand for green products and has influenced purchase behaviour. Clothing manufacturers and retailers therefore need to put social and environmental thought into the acquisition, maintenance, and disposal decisions in the clothing industry (Patwary et al., 2022). Emerging-market consumers are conscious of the latest fashion and styles. However, their level of awareness and the amount of environmental knowledge they have will influence their environmental consciousness (Sardesai & Govekar, 2022). Simanjuntak et al. (2023) argue that consumers who possess knowledge about the environmental friendliness of products are likely to consider the environmentally friendly attributes of products when they make purchase decisions and consider the value of a product before deciding to buy it. It has been argued that consumer awareness and knowledge of environmental sustainability, as well as social pressures to support local manufacturing and sustainably sourced products, have been rising (Unisa, 2020) although it is unclear if this is the case among the emerging market consumers in South Africa. Dreyer, Botha, Van der Merwe, le Roux, and Ellis (2016) supported by Mandarić, Hunjet, and Vuković (2022) and Kamalanon, Chen, and Le (2022) found that consumers rarely buy green clothing owing to the low level of awareness and also because there is insufficient information about green products.

The clothing sector, which mainly consists of the fast-fashion sector, has a projected revenue of US\$1,138.00 million in 2023, with the number of users expected to be 21.76 million by 2027 (Statista, 2023). The spending habits, fashion industry trends, and massive amounts of waste and pollution generated in the clothing industry show that South Africa is a fashion-conscious nation (Unisa, 2020). The fast-fashion waste is because the country is an emerging economy with high unemployment and poverty, which forces consumers to first consider making a living before considering the environment (Unisa, 2020). A study by Smith (2013) indicated that the majority of South African consumers are not very conscious or concerned about the environment, nor are they concerned about the future impact of their clothing consumption behaviour. Smith (2013) further emphasised the need for creating awareness and educating consumers about the social, economic, and environmental impacts of their consumption behaviour. Shen, Zheng, Chow, and Chow (2014) listed the various options consumers have to be green-conscious and included acquiring clothing “with pro-environmental attributes, such as clothing made of natural fibres or environmentally friendly textiles (e.g., organic cotton or recycled polyester), and items made of recycled materials”.

A study in Japan, which is a developed nation, reported that consumers were willing to switch from non-green clothing to green clothing consumption (Moore, 2019). However, studies have argued that consumers' intention to buy products does not always lead to actual behaviour, which creates a purchase-intention/actual-behaviour gap, leading to the low adoption of green clothing products (Dhir, Talwar, Sadiq, Sakashita, & Kaur, 2021; Suson & Gutierrez, 2022). In contradiction with the Smith (2013) study, a study conducted in South Africa by Taljaard, Sonnenberg, and Jacobs (2018) suggested that consumers are aware of the effects the clothing industry has on the environment and are aware of green clothing behaviour, and that this in turn influences their green purchase intention. Yet, the study did not prove if green purchase intention does, in fact, influence green purchase behaviour. Another South African study proposed the need for creating awareness and literacy about green textiles and the clothing industry to increase green purchases (Matodzi, Mastamet-Mason, & Moodley-Diar, 2022).

The purpose of the current study was to determine if the green-purchase intention of emerging-market consumers influenced green-purchase behaviour. The study also determined if environmental knowledge and social and peer pressure influence green purchase intentions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. *The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)*

The Theory of Planned behaviour (TPB) was developed by Ajzen (1991) as an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). The initial TRA model included attitude and the subjective norm, but Ajzen (1991) later added perceived behavioural control as an additional variable, which led to the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) model (Ajzen, 1991). Both the subjective norm and perceived behavioural control were proven to be predictors of intention and behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB model was developed to determine the factors that influence consumer behaviour (Khalil, Abdullah, Abd Manaf, Sharaai, & Nabegu, 2017).

The TPB has been widely applied in different fields, including psychology, marketing, IT, and education (Amron & Noh, 2021; Mkhize, 2021; Nikoi, 2022). It has also been applied in green marketing to test recycling behaviour, waste disposal (Xu, Ling, Lu, & Shen, 2017) green purchase behaviour (Joshi & Rahman, 2016) sustainable disposal behaviour regarding clothing items (Jahura, 2020) green vehicles (Hamilton & Terblanche-Smit, 2018) green cosmetic products (Putri, Wahyuni, & Yasa, 2021) and the consumption of green hotel and green restaurant products (Han, 2020). The advantage of the TPB model is that it allows the inclusion of variables from other theories.

Motivated by the Purboyo, Lamsah, Zulfikar, and Wahyuni (2022) study, this study determined the effect of environmental knowledge and social/peer influence on green purchase intention and the influence of green purchase intention on green purchase behaviour. Joshi and Rahman (2016) listed environmental knowledge as one of the major drivers of green consumer behaviour.

2.2. Environmental Knowledge

Environmental knowledge has been defined by Fryxell and Lo (2003) as “a general knowledge of facts, concepts, and relationships concerning the natural environment and its major ecosystems”. Environmental knowledge consists of the knowledge people possess regarding the environment, their level of understanding about sustainable development, and the actions leading to impacts on the environment (Mostafa, 2007). Lee (2010) further added that environmental knowledge involves the basic knowledge a person has about the action they can take to protect the environment. This calls for organisations to create awareness of green product attributes so as to influence consumers’ attitudes and behaviours towards green clothing products (Makhitha, 2021).

In applying environmental knowledge to apparel buying behaviour, Khare and Sadachar (2017) referred to the fact that certain processes in clothing manufacturing lead to water and air pollution. This encompasses the production of fibres, the procedures for dyeing and finishing, the recycling methods employed for fibres, and the understanding of the rules enforced by government agencies to address air and water pollution caused by the manufacturing process. Evidence has been provided on the relationship between environmental knowledge and green purchase intention and that the greater the environmental knowledge a person possesses, the greater their green purchase intention will be (Aman, Harun, & Hussein, 2012; Kanchanapibul, Lacka, Wang, & Chan, 2014; Putri et al., 2021). Mohd (2016) supported by Simanjuntak et al. (2023) contended that environmental knowledge has the most significant relationship with green purchase intention. In contrast, Indriani, Rahayu, and Hadiwidjojo (2019) with the support of Purboyo et al. (2022), discovered that environmental knowledge does not significantly influence consumers’ intentions to make green purchases. Simanjuntak et al. (2023) similarly found that environmental knowledge does not have a relationship with green product purchase behaviour.

According to the findings of Vicente-Molina, Fernández-Sáinz, and Izagirre-Olaizola (2013) environmental knowledge differs according to the geographic origin of consumers, and the knowledge of consumers from emerging countries differs from that of consumers in developed countries. Against this background, it can be hypothesised that:

H₁: Environmental knowledge has a significant influence on the green purchase intention of emerging market consumers in South Africa.

2.3. Social and Peer Pressure

Social and peer pressure emerged from the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) as a subjective norm, which describes the social pressure encountered by consumers to perform or not perform certain actions and behaviours. Ajzen (1991) refers to subjective norms as social pressure perceived by consumers to engage in a particular behaviour. It is the social pressure and the expectations of significant others of a person that influence their behavioural intention (Nikoi, 2022). This results in consumers purchasing green products to show off their ecological concerns to society (Joshi & Rahman, 2016). Because of the influence of people on each other, Wood and Hayes (2012) suggest that consumer decisions should be evaluated within a social context.

Studies that investigated the effect of social and peer pressure presented mixed findings. Purboyo et al. (2022) and Aseri and Ansari (2023) confirmed the significant effect of social and peer pressure on consumers’ green purchase intentions. Johnstone and Hooper (2016) further asserted that the more pressure a consumer perceives from their social influences, the more intention they have to perform the behaviour. Joshi and Rahman (2016) and Johnstone and Hooper (2016) also found that social groups as a subjective norm have a significant positive effect on purchase intention and actual green purchasing. Social and peer pressure were considered to have the most important influence on green purchase behaviour (Nguyen, Lobo, & Greenland, 2017). Contradicting these findings, Varshneya, Pandey, and Das (2017) indicated that green purchase intentions for organic clothing are not influenced by social influence. It can then be postulated that:

H₂: Social and peer pressure have a significant influence on the green purchase intentions of emerging market consumers in South Africa.

2.4. Green Purchase Intention and Purchase Behaviour

Green buying behaviour was conceptualised by Mostafa (2007) as involving the consumption of products that are environmentally friendly and responsive to the needs of the environment. They are described as products that have a minimal impact on the environment (Mainieri, Barnett, Valdero, Unipan, & Oskamp, 1997). Chan (2001) defined green purchase behaviour as “a particular type of environmentally friendly behaviour [through which] consumers express their caring and attention to the environment”. Mostafa (2007) further referred to green purchase behaviour as involving those products that are recyclable, conservable, beneficial or benevolent to the environment, and sensitive or responsive to ecological concerns. Similarly, Nguyen, Vo, and Nguyen-Nhu-Y (2022) state that green consumer behaviour involves the reuse of energy or energy conservation and consumers’ reactions to the product information on labels and manufacturers’ marketing messages. Nguyen et al. (2022) further describe a green product as one with design or product characteristics (or a product manufacturing process) using recyclable materials to reduce toxic waste. Green products are ecologically safe, biodegradable, and do not use synthetic dye. The goal is to protect the environment (Mainieri et al., 1997). Such products are labelled with eco-labels and are also known as “eco products” or “environmentally friendly products” (Nguyen et al., 2022).

In the context of clothing, Niinimäki (2010) defines green clothing as “clothing designed to last for long [or] lifetime use, [which] is produced using [an] ethical production system, which can be locally made and generates

little or no environmental impact, and [which] makes use of eco-labelled or recycled materials". Consumer's purchase behaviour is determined by their intentions to purchase certain products. Sharma (2021) defines green purchase intention as the willingness of consumers to purchase green products with the drive to save the environment. Past studies have proved that green purchase intention influences green purchase behaviour (Dhir et al., 2021; Jaiswal & Kant, 2018; Testa, Sarti, & Frey, 2019; Wang, Wang, Wang, Li, & Zhao, 2018). Studies by Uddin and Khan (2018); Park and Ha (2014); Anvar and Venter (2014) and Bamberg and Möser (2007) have also confirmed the influence of green purchase intention on purchase behaviour. The following hypothesis was formulated against this background:

H₃: Green purchase intention has a significant influence on the green purchase behaviour of emerging-market consumers in South Africa.

2.5. Conceptual Model and Hypothesis Development

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual model to be tested in this study. The hypotheses H1- H3 appear in the conceptual model below and illustrate the relationship between the constructs.

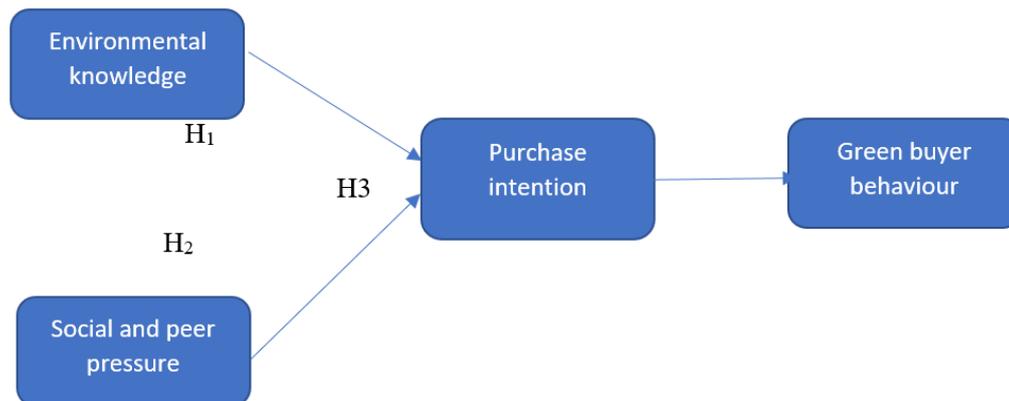


Figure 1. Conceptual model.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A quantitative approach was applied for the study, and online survey techniques were used to determine the green buying behaviour of emerging-market consumers in South Africa. Quantitative methodology has become popular among researchers in green marketing.

3.1. Questionnaire Design

A structured questionnaire was designed, targeted at consumers, to determine their green purchase behaviour. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: Section 1 covered the main questions, while Section 2 covered the demographics of the respondents. There were four constructs in the questionnaire: environmental knowledge, social influence, green intention, and green behaviour. The constructs in the questionnaire matched those in the conceptual model. Each item was measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "1 = strongly disagree" to "5 = strongly agree". The constructs/variables and various items were adapted from existing studies.

3.2. Sampling Procedure and Data Collection

Data was collected by means of a survey that was administered online by an independent research company. Data administration took place in June 2021. The cover letter of the questionnaire described the purpose of the study and why the participants were targeted. The research company had over 3000 consumers who reside in Soweto, buy clothing, and are between the ages of 18 and 65. Since the data was collected online, the link to the questionnaire was conveniently distributed online via email and WhatsApp to all the consumers in the database who live in Soweto. The respondents filled out a total of 290 questionnaires online. However, 80 of these questionnaires were either incomplete or did not meet the survey criteria and were therefore discarded, which resulted in 210 fully completed questionnaires. To ensure that a reasonable sample size was reached, additional data was collected from 90 participants by field workers who intercepted people meeting the qualifying criteria, for example, that they shop for clothing online and also reside in the township. A total of 300 questionnaires were fully completed after this exercise. The sample size matched those of other studies investigating online shopping (Muda, Mohd, & Hassan, 2016).

3.3. Ethical Considerations

The questionnaire had a cover letter that informed the participants that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time before the submission of the data if they wished. The participants were also informed of the anonymity of the information they provided and were assured of the privacy and security of the data and that participants' information would remain anonymous. The department where the research is located issued an ethical clearance.

3.4. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using Statistical Analysis System Jump (SAS JMP) version 15 for Mac and the R language version 3.5.2. Statistical tests made the descriptive analyses, exploratory factor analysis, and structural equation modelling (SEM) possible that were necessary to achieve the objective of the study. The SEM was used to test the conceptual model developed for the study, while factor analysis was done to ensure that the items related to the two constructs (environmental knowledge and social influence) were grouped together.

4. RESULT AND FINDINGS

4.1. Demographic Information of the Respondents

The respondents were overrepresented by females, with over 70 percent of the population (73.6%, $n = 221$) being women, compared to 26.3% ($n = 79$) male respondents. The age group 18–24 was best represented at 42 percent ($n = 126$) of the population, followed by the 25–29 ($n = 60$, 27%) and 30–40 age groups ($n = 51$, 23%). Unmarried respondents were highly represented, at over 70%, or $n = 216$, of the population. Over one-third of the respondents had a degree (38%, $n = 115$), followed by those with Grade 12 (37%, $n = 110$), and those holding a post-school qualification such as a diploma or certificate (23%, $n = 68$). As regards monthly income, most of the respondents earned between R5 000 and R7 500 (62%, $n = 186$), 1 percent earned between R7500 and R20 000, and only 9 percent ($n = 27$) earned above R20 000.

The respondents typically tended to buy infrequently (31.1%, $n = 68$) and monthly (30.1%, $n = 66$), with very few of them buying weekly (2.3%, $n = 5$). Transport by taxi (43.7%, $n = 97$) was the most popular means of transport among the respondents, followed by “own vehicle” (25.7%, $n = 57$). The largest proportion of respondents spent 1.5 to 2 hours (36.4%, $n = 82$) at the mall, and another 30.2% spent 2 to 4 hours ($n = 68$) in the mall. The vast majority of respondents (80.4%, $n = 181$) visited one to two malls. Almost 30% (29.3%, $n = 66$) of the respondents visited 3 to 4 stores.

4.2. Reliability and Validity

To determine the reliability of the constructs, the factor loadings for all items were assessed. They ranged from 0.64 to 1.0, which proved the internal consistency of the constructs and items. Table 1 shows the factor loading and Cronbach’s alpha values for the constructs. Environmental knowledge had a value of 0.96, while social and peer influence had a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.98. These values are well supported in the literature. Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010) considered a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.70 as acceptable.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to assess the construct validity of the study by determining whether the items were loaded under the constructs as intended in the questionnaire. The communalities ranged from 0.71 to 0.94, which is higher than the suggested minimum threshold of 0.2 by Child (2006). Constructs were developed from the existing questionnaire, as reported in the section on the data-collection instrument, to achieve construct validity.

Table 1. Factor analysis.

Green factors	Factor 1: Environmental knowledge	Factor 2: Social and peer influence
Environmentally friendly clothing is made from non-polluted materials.	1.003	
Environmentally friendly clothing has a high recyclability ratio.	0.978	
Environmentally friendly clothing has an ecolabel.	0.96	
The ingredients of environmentally friendly clothing items are clearly labelled.	0.939	
Environmentally friendly clothing has used packing materials.	0.938	
Environmentally friendly clothing has a high energy conservation rate.	0.938	
I understand the symbols used on the packages of environmentally friendly products.	0.780	
I am knowledgeable about environmental issues.	0.778	
I always have up-to-date knowledge about environmentally friendly products.	0.645	
My friends often go shopping for environmentally friendly products with me.		0.965
My friends often recommend environmentally friendly products.		0.947
My friends often share their experiences and knowledge about environmentally friendly products with me.		0.939
My friends often discuss environmental issues and products with me.		0.922
I learned a lot about environmental issues from my friends.		0.855
Cronbach alpha	0.98	0.96
Mean score (M)	3.40	3.10
Standard deviation (SD)	1.20	1.20

The EFA was conducted in SAS JMP version 15. Axis factoring was considered appropriate for the correlation patterns between the questions used for the green clothing purchase behaviour of emerging-market consumers to determine discriminant validity. To extract the risk factors, principal axis factoring and quartimin (oblique) rotation were both used. Two factors that had eigenvalues greater than 1 were identified, with a total variance of 76.75

percent. Factor 1 loaded nine items and was named *Environmental knowledge*, while factor 2 was named *Social and peer influence* and consisted of five items. Environmental knowledge had a mean score of 3.4 higher than that for social and peer influence, which was 3.1, which demonstrates the level of agreement the respondents had with the constructs' items. The standard deviations for each of the two factors were 1.2, showing some level of disagreement among the respondents on the items being measured.

4.3. Model Testing

The conceptual model developed for this study was tested using the SEM lavaan version 0.6-1 (Rosseel, 2012) in R version 3.5.2 for structural equation modelling. The test statistics were produced using the maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors (maximum likelihood mean/MLM). The MLM chi-square test statistic was also used. The latent factors were standardised, which allowed all the factor loadings to be subjected to free estimation. This was necessary to ensure that causal relationships between latent constructs were assessed (Nusair & Hua, 2010). The indices used to determine if the model is fit included the chi-square value over degree of freedom (412.162/248), normed fit index (NFI - 0.97), incremental fit index (IFI - 0.99), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI - 0.97), comparative fit index (CFI - 0.97), and standard root mean residual (root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA - 0.066). The values for the indices showed that there was a good model fit, as indicated in Table 2. The indices must be greater than 0.9 to ensure that the model is fit. The indices determined in this study included the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), CFI, TLI, IFI, relative fit index (RFI), and NFI. However, values greater than 0.8 can be marginally accepted. Steiger (2007) a model fit resulted in a RMSEA of 0.066.

Table 2. Model fit indices for path analyses.

Model fit index	Chi-square-X2/DF	GFI	CFI	TLI	IFI	RFI	NFI	RMSE
Value indicator	412.162/248	0.81	0.97	0.97	0.99	0.96	0.97	0.66

4.4. Hypothesis Testing

As stated in the earlier section, SEM with regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses formulated in this study, producing two regression models. The first model determined the relationship between the two independent variables in this study, which are environmental knowledge and social and peer influence, and the dependant variable, green purchase intention. The second model determined whether green purchase intention influences green behaviour. Z-values and Wald tests were used to test the statistical significance of the SEM model.

Table 3 shows the results of SEM model 1, which show a significant relationship between environmental knowledge and green purchase intention, with a beta coefficient of 1.175, p > 0.000. Social and peer pressure also have a significant influence on green purchase behaviour, with a beta coefficient of 0.461, p > 0.000. This signals that environmental knowledge has a stronger influence on green purchase intention than social and peer pressure.

Table 3. Regressions – green factors and purchase intention to buy green clothing.

Green factors	Beta coefficient	Standard error	z-value	p-value	Standard coefficient
Environmental knowledge	1.175	0.173	6.778	0.000	0.638
Social and peer pressure	0.461	0.120	3.834	0.000	0.250

Table 4 shows the results for SEM model 2, which determined the effect of green purchase intention on green clothing purchase behaviour. The effect that green purchase intention has on green clothing purchase behaviour is high, with a beta coefficient of 0.78, p > 0.000.

Table 4. Regressions – intention and behaviour.

Buyer behaviour	Beta coefficient	Standard error	z-value	p-value	Standard coefficient
Intention	0.781	0.70	11.081	0.000	0.821

The results of the hypothesis testing are shown in Figure 2.

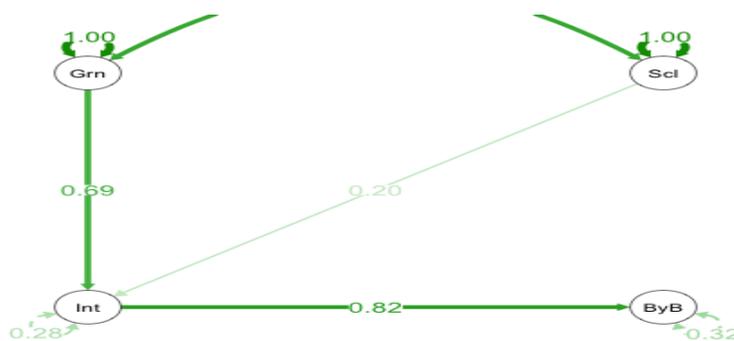


Figure 2. Results of hypothesis testing

5. DISCUSSION

The results of this study proved that environmental knowledge has a significant influence on green purchase intention. The effect that environmental knowledge has on green purchase intention is greater than that of social and peer pressure. This shows the importance of disseminating environmental knowledge. Several studies investigating the effect of environmental knowledge on purchase intention support these findings (Khare & Sadachar, 2017; Liebenberg, 2015) although other studies disagreed (Indriani et al., 2019; Simanjuntak et al., 2023). Yet other studies have suggested that the influence of environmental knowledge on green purchase intention differs for different market segments or types of products (Dobbelstein & Lochner, 2023).

Social and peer pressure also have a significant influence on green purchase intention, although the influence is smaller than that of environmental knowledge. This is well supported in the existing literature, where social influence is reported to have an effect on green purchase intention, albeit not as much as other factors (Hamilton & Terblanche-Smit, 2018; Khare & Sadachar, 2017; Nguyen et al., 2022; Sardesai & Govekar, 2022). Some studies, on the other hand, found that social and peer influence do not influence purchase intention (Taljaard et al., 2018).

The study also set out to determine if green purchase intention has an influence on green clothing purchase behaviour. This was also widely investigated (and confirmed) in the existing literature (Aseri & Ansari, 2023; Dhir et al., 2021; Dobbelstein & Lochner, 2023; Jahura, 2020; Liebenberg, 2015). The effect of green purchase intention on green clothing behaviour is higher than the effect of environmental knowledge and social/peer pressure on purchase intention, as supported by Aseri and Ansari (2023) and Kumar (2012). This shows that the higher the level of green purchase intention a consumer has, the more pronounced their green purchase behaviour will be.

6. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of green purchase intention on green purchase behaviour, as well as the influence of environmental knowledge and social/peer pressure on green purchase intention. The study found that environmental knowledge has a significant and relatively stronger influence on green purchase intention than social and peer pressure, although the latter was also significant. Since the effect of environmental knowledge on green purchase intention is considerable, clothing companies should continue creating awareness to increase the level of knowledge about the environment and the effects of the clothing industry on the environment, so as to increase the green purchase intention of consumers. This can be done in various ways, including through the use of social media, in-store promotions, and advertisements. Clothing companies could also cooperate and share the costs of creating awareness and knowledge about environmentally friendly clothing so as to outcompete the global companies selling cheaper fast fashion in the country. Another finding of this study was that social and peer pressure do influence green purchase intention. Increasing peer pressure through, for example, word of mouth or social media could lead to greater green purchase intention.

The study also found that green purchase intention influences green purchase behaviour very significantly. Clothing companies should therefore set out to increase green purchase intention and, thus, ultimately, green purchase behaviour.

Future research could investigate other factors influencing green purchase behaviour. Since this study targeted emerging-market consumers from one township, future studies could target consumers from different townships in South Africa. This study proved that environmental concern influences purchase intention. Therefore, future studies could determine if environmentally knowledgeable consumers would select green, sustainably produced merchandise over similar, more affordable items.

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Institutional Review Board Statement: The Ethical Committee of the University of South Africa, Department of Marketing and Retail Management has granted approval for this study (Ref. No. 2018_MRM_006).

Transparency: The author states that the manuscript is honest, truthful, and transparent, that no key aspects of the investigation have been omitted, and that any differences from the study as planned have been clarified. This study followed all writing ethics.

Competing Interests: The author declares that there are no conflicts of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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