

# DETERMINANTS AFFECTING GREEN PURCHASE INTENTION: A CASE OF VIETNAMESE CONSUMERS

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## ABSTRACT

*Environmental pollution is a serious problem that all countries are facing, especially Vietnam's economy is growing very fast in recent years. The development and marketing of products designed to reduce negative effects on the environment, which can meet the needs of consumers and society. The main purpose of this study is to find out determinants affecting green purchase intention of Vietnamese consumers. The researchers surveyed 800 consumers related to the green purchase intention. Consumers answered 23 items and 785 questionnaires processed. The Data collected from November 2018 to February 2019 in four big cities of Vietnam, 200 consumers for each city using Simple Random Sampling technique. The Cronbach's Alpha and the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) used for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) technique and using partial least squares method. Finally, the findings of the study have five factors affecting green purchase intention with significance level 0.01.*

**Keywords:** Eco-Labeling, Green Purchase Intention, Trust, Attitude and Perceived Value.

## INTRODUCTION

In Vietnam, although there are no separate regulations on green consumption, many contents related to green consumption and sustainable consumption were soon included in policy content. Vietnam Government had integrated and regulated in many documents of the Party and State versions. Nowadays, consumers are willing to pay more for green products so that many enterprises make efforts to invest in products that ensure green and clean factors and build a green brand associated with sustainable development.

Besides, recent studies show that consumers are aware of green issues such as scarcity of natural resources, global warming and pollution. They also take these issues into consideration when making green products purchase decisions by (Shao et al., 2017). Although consumers continue to satisfy their wants and desires, nowadays, they feel that, at the same time, they should adopt a more active role in the protection, preservation and conservation of the environment. When people's consumption trends change, firms must change their perceptions. As consumers move towards using green products, manufacturers must make the transition to survive and thrive. Earlier studies relating to consumers green purchase intention/behaviour have been mostly done in the context of developed nations and show their attitude and perspective towards purchasing green products (Yadav & Pathak, 2016).

In this context, the issue of sustainably environmental-friendly production as well as the understanding of the changes in cognitive, psychological, and customer behavior towards nature has become increasingly urgent and needs to be solved. In fact, Eco-labelling now is one of the

green marketing tools that promote consumers to buy green products. Understanding more about determinants of consumers purchasing behaviors can help Vietnamese enterprises identify and obtain the right marketing strategies to meet the consumers demand. This research aims to propose a model for the influence of various factors on the green purchase intention of consumers on Vietnam market to understand if consumers are stimulated with eco-labelling or not. Besides, eco-labelling is one factor in many factors that is now still a new issue in Vietnamese enterprise's marketing strategy.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Green Product

According to the Commission of the European Communities (2001), green product is a product that *“use less resources, have lower impacts and risks to the environment and prevent waste generation already at the conception stage”*. Dangelico & Pontrandolfo (2010) define green products are *“such products as having a positive impact in that they reduce the environmental impact of other products”*.

### Purchase Intention

Intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behavior; they are indications of how hard people are willing to try, or how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behavior. Purchase intention is a factor used to evaluate the ability to perform behavior in the future. Purchase intention refers to a consumers intention to purchase a product, or to patronize a service firm. Previous research has supported the link between service quality and purchase intention by (Shao et al., 2004). In short, purchase intention is defined as a consciously decided plan to make an effort to buy a particular product or service (Spears & Singh, 2004).

### Green Purchase Intention

Green purchasing refers to the purchase of environmentally friendly products and avoiding products that harm the environment (Chan, 2001). While Rashid (2009) defines that *“Green purchase intention (PI) is conceptualized as the probability and willingness of a person to give preference to products having eco-friendly features over other traditional products in their purchase considerations”*. A nearer point of view that green purchase intention refers to consumers willingness to purchase green products. Intentions capture the motivational factors that influence green purchase behaviour of consumers (Ramayah et al., 2010).

Each author has his/her own definition of green purchase intention but they all indicate the willingness to purchase green products. There are many factors that impact on green purchase intention including individual and situational elements which have been studied by authors from 2000 until now. The individual factors such as emotions, habits, perceived consumer effectiveness, perceived behavioural control, values and personal norms, trust, knowledge and lifestyle. The situational factors such as: price, product availability, subjective norm/social norm and reference groups, product attributes and quality, store related attributes, brand image, eco-labelling and certification, environment message (Joshi & Rahman, 2015).

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## Consumer's Trust

Trust has been defined as the individual's expectation that another person, product or organization will keep promises and fulfil obligations (Perrini et al., 2010). According to (Thøgersen et al., 2000), consumers will use a label in their purchasing decisions only if they trust it. Consumers must be aware of the label and understand what they mean. "*Consumer trust will translate into an intention to purchase a product*" (Perrini et al., 2010).

Some researchers found out that trust to eco-label are positively and significantly correlated with purchase intention (Perrini et al., 2010; Rahbar & Abdul, 2011; Atkinson & Rosenthal, 2014; Daugbjerg et al., 2014; Taufique et al., 2017).

According to Rahbar & Abdul (2011) research, they found out that trust to eco-label have positive and significant correlated with actual purchase behaviour of consumer in Penang-Malaysia. The respondent's trust in eco-label has a positive effect on consumer's actual purchase behaviour. Without consumer's confidence and trust of eco-label, it is very difficult to convince them to make purchase decision. Although consumer's trust has been identified as important for successful eco-labelling, relatively few studies show how its factors affect the attitude and green purchase intention. Therefore, the following hypothesis built.

- H1a: A significant and positive relationship exists between eco-labelling and consumer's trust*
- H1b: A significant and positive causal relationship exists between consumer's trust and consumer's attitude.*
- H1c: A significant and positive relationship exists between consumer's trust and consumer's green purchase intention.*

## Consumer's Perceived Value

Perceived value is defined as a consumer's overall evaluation of the net benefit of a product or service based on a consumer's appraisal by Chen & Chang (2012). Green perceived value is defined as "*a consumer's overall appraisal of the net benefit of a product or service between what is received and what is given based on the consumer's environmental desires, sustainable expectations, and green needs*" by Spreng & Patterson (1997).

The study of Chen & Chang (2012) finds out that "*the increase of green perceived value can not only meet both of the strict international environmental regulations and the popular consumer environmentalism, but also enhance both of green trust and green purchase intentions*". According to De-Medeiros, et al. (2016) perceived value of green product increases willingness to pay in the purchasing decision. "*Perceived green value is positively associated with purchase intention of green and environmentally friendly products by (Chen et al., 2012). He studied the environmentally responsible behaviour in eco-tourism and found that perceived value positively influence the environmentally responsible behaviour*" (Yadav & Pathak, 2017). Therefore, the following hypothesis built.

- H2a: A significant and positive relationship exists between eco-labelling and consumer's perceived value.*
- H2b: A significant and positive relationship exists between consumer's perceived value and consumer's*

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*attitude.*

*H2c: A significant and positive relationship exists between consumer's perceived value and consumer's green purchase intention.*

### **Consumer's Environmental Concern**

The impact of eco-seals depends on the target market's level of environmental concern. It appears that the types of inferences consumers make about the eco-seal source vary with environmental concern which in turn differentially influences persuasion (Bickart & Ruth, 2012). Green consumption brings many benefits to consumers and the living environment (Bertsch et al. 2016). Environmental concern affect positively to intention purchase (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012). Therefore, the following hypothesis built.

*H3a: A significant and positive relationship exists between eco-labelling and consumer's environmental concern.*

*H3b: A significant and positive causal relationship exists between consumer's environmental concern and consumer's attitude.*

*H3c: A significant and positive relationship exists between consumer's environmental concern and consumer's green purchase intention.*

### **Consumer's Attitude**

There are some research focusing on attitude: a first study concerns the attitude toward green product and green purchase (Chan, 2001; Atkinson & Rosenthal, 2014; Paul et al., 2016). Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez (2012) found out that brand attitude affects purchase intention as a partial mediation of environmental concern. Attitude toward advertising and brand (Bickart & Ruth, 2012) affected by eco-seal leads to positively impact on purchase intentions. And the attitude to company (Cho, 2015) shows that sustainability and environmental labeling impact significantly firm's attitude and therefore increases consumer purchase intentions. The second is the attitude toward environmental protection (Rashid, 2009; Mei et al., 2012; Chekima et al., 2016; Khan & Mohsin, 2017). These results indicate that environmental attitude significantly influence green purchase intention. Therefore, the following hypothesis built.

*H4a: A significant and positive relationship exists between eco-labelling and consumer's attitude.*

*H4b: A significant and positive relationship exists between consumer's attitude and consumer's green purchase intention.*

### **Eco-Labeling**

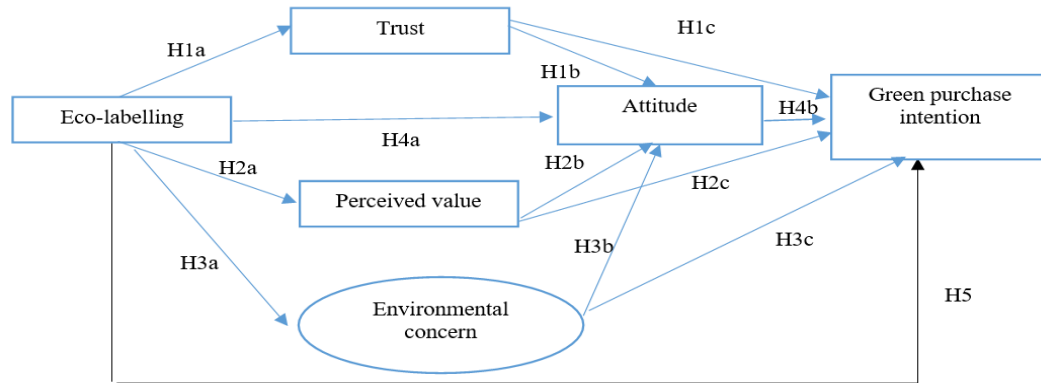
Ecolabels have emerged as one of the main tools of green marketing (Rex & Baumann, 2007), and it is a multidimensional concept (Prieto-Sandoval et al., 2016). There are a number of ways by which marketers convey environmental benefits of products. One is through general or specific product claims on product labels, for example, “eco-friendly”, “environmentally safe”, “recyclable”, “biodegradable” and “ozone-friendly” (Morris et al., 1995 cited by D'Souza et al.,

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2006).

Eco-labels are information tools that aim to internalize the external effects on the environment of the production, consumption and disposal of products (Bougherara & Combris 2009, cited by Atkinson & Rosenthal, 2014). Therefore, the following hypothesis built.

*H5: A significant and positive causal relationship exists between eco-labelling and consumer's green purchase intention*

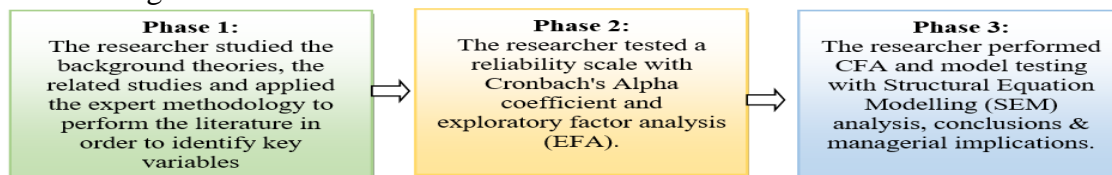


(Source: Researchers proposed)

**FIGURE 1**  
**RESEARCH MODEL FOR FACTORS AFFECTING THE GREEN PURCHASE INTENTION OF VIETNAMESE CONSUMERS**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this study, the researchers have chosen to use the non-probability sampling which is the convenience sampling. Through convenience sampling, the selected sample represents the total population of 7.000 Vietnamese consumers in four big Cities. Convenience sampling will be used in this study due to the simplicity and convenience. It helps potential participants to join the discussion whenever they are available. The researchers randomly select the respondents among four big cities in Vietnam. Questionnaires will be distributing at four attractive Cities such as Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang City, Hai Phong City and Ha Noi City. This study has three phases following.



(Source: The researchers proposed)

**FIGURE 2**  
**RESEARCH PROCESS FOR FACTORS AFFECTING THE GREEN PURCHASE INTENTION OF VIETNAMESE CONSUMERS**

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**Phase 1:** The researchers applied the expert methodology and based on 20 experts consultation as group discussions are to improve the scale and design of the questionnaire. The results of surveying 20 experts showed that all of them are agreement with questionnaire.

**Phase 2:** The researchers tested a reliability scale with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Completed questionnaires were directly collected from the surveyed consumers related to the green products because it took them less than 20 minutes to finish the survey. There are 800 consumers and answered 23 items but sample size of 785 consumers processed, 15 samples lack of information. The primary sources of data collected from November 2018 to February 2019 for four big cities of Vietnam, each city has 200 consumers surveyed. The sample has more than 10 percent of consumers related to green purchase intention. The researchers surveyed by hard copy distributed among population of 7.000 consumers in big cities. Sample size of 785 consumers in a number of consumers represented in above mentioned cities. All data collected from the questionnaire are coded, processed by SPSS 20.0 and Amos. Consumers' responses measured through an adapted questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale (Conventions: 1: Completely disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Normal; 4: Agree; 5: completely agree). Any observational variables with a total correlation coefficient greater than 0.3 and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient greater than 0.7 would ensure reliability of the scale. This method is based on the Eigenvalue, the appropriate factorial analysis and the observed variables in the whole which are correlated when Average Variance Extracted is >50%, the KMO coefficient is within 0.5 to 1, Sig coefficient  $\leq 5\%$ , the loading factors of all observed variables are >0.5. In addition, the researchers testing scale reliability with Cronbach's alpha coefficient and Exploratory Factor Analyses (EFA) were performed. The least squares method is a form of mathematical regression analysis that finds the line of best fit for a set of data, providing a visual demonstration of the relationship between the data points. Each point of data is representative of the relationship between a known independent variable and an unknown dependent variable.

**Phase 3:** The researchers performed CFA and model testing with Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) analysis. The purpose of CFA helps to clarify: (1) Unilaterality, (2) Reliability of scale, (3) Convergence value, and (4) Difference value. A research model is considered relevant to market data if Chi-square testing is  $p\text{-value} > 5\%$ ;  $\text{CMIN}/\text{df} \leq 2$ , some cases  $\text{CMIN}/\text{df}$  may be  $\leq 3$  or  $< 5$ ; GFI, TLI, CFI  $\geq 0.9$ . However, according to recent researcher's opinion, GFI is still acceptable when it is greater than 0.8;  $\text{RMSEA} \leq 0.08$ . Apart from the above criteria, the test results must also ensure the synthetic reliability  $> 0.6$ ; Average Variance Extracted must be greater than 0.5 (Hair & Anderson, 2010).

## RESULTS

The scale reliability tests for factors affecting the Green Purchase Intention (GPI)

<b>Table 1</b> <b>THE SCALE RELIABILITY TESTS FOR FACTORS AFFECTING THE GREEN PURCHASE INTENTION</b>	
<b>Components</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
<p><b>Eco-labelling (ECO)</b>            ECO1: I know the meaning of the term “<i>recycled</i>” and “<i>eco-friendly</i>”.            ECO2: I know the meaning of the term “<i>organic</i>” and “<i>energy-efficient</i>”.            ECO3: I can recognise the eco-label seal.            ECO4: The eco-label on package provides information about environmental protection.</p>	<b>0.852</b>
<p><b>Trust (TRU)</b>            TRU1: The label is genuinely committed to environmental protection and its products is true.            TRU2: If the label makes a claim or promise about its product, it’s probably true.            TRU3: I feel that this product’s environmental performance is generally dependable and meets my expectations.            TRU4: This product keep promise and commitments for environmental protection.</p>	<b>0.966</b>
<p><b>Perceived value (PER)</b>            PER1: This product’s environmental functions provide very good value for me and meets your expectations.            PER2: I purchase this product because it has more environmental concern than other products.            PER3: I Purchase this product because it is environmental friendly.            PER4: I purchase this product because it has more environmental benefit than other products.</p>	<b>0.956</b>
<p><b>Environmental concern (ENV)</b>            ENV1: I am worried about the worsening quality of the environment.            ENV2: The environment is my major concern.            ENV3: I am emotionally involved in environmental protection issues.            ENV4: I often think about how the environmental quality can be improved.</p>	<b>0.956</b>
<p><b>Attitude (ATT)</b>            ATT 1: I like the idea of purchasing green.            ATT 2: Purchasing green is a good idea.            ATT 3: I have a favourable attitude toward purchasing a green version of a product.</p>	<b>0.947</b>
<p><b>Green purchase intention (GPI)</b>            GPI1: I will consider buying green product because they are less polluting.            GPI2: I plan to switch to other brands/versions green product.            GPI3: I intend to purchase this product in the future because of its environmental performance.            GPI4: I will buy green product in my next purchase.</p>	<b>0.887</b>

(Source: The researcher’s collecting data and SPSS 20.0)

Table 1 showed that all of 23 variables surveyed and Cronbach's Alpha if Item deleted greater than 0.7. Table 1 showed that Cronbach's Alpha for Eco-labelling (ECO) is 0.852; Cronbach's Alpha for Trust (TRU) is 0.966; Cronbach's Alpha for Perceived value (PER) is 0.956; Cronbach's Alpha for Environmental concern (ENV) is 0.956; Cronbach's Alpha for Attitude (ATT) is 0.947 and Cronbach's Alpha for Green Purchase Intention (GPI) is 0.887. This showed that all of Cronbach’s Alpha are very reliability.

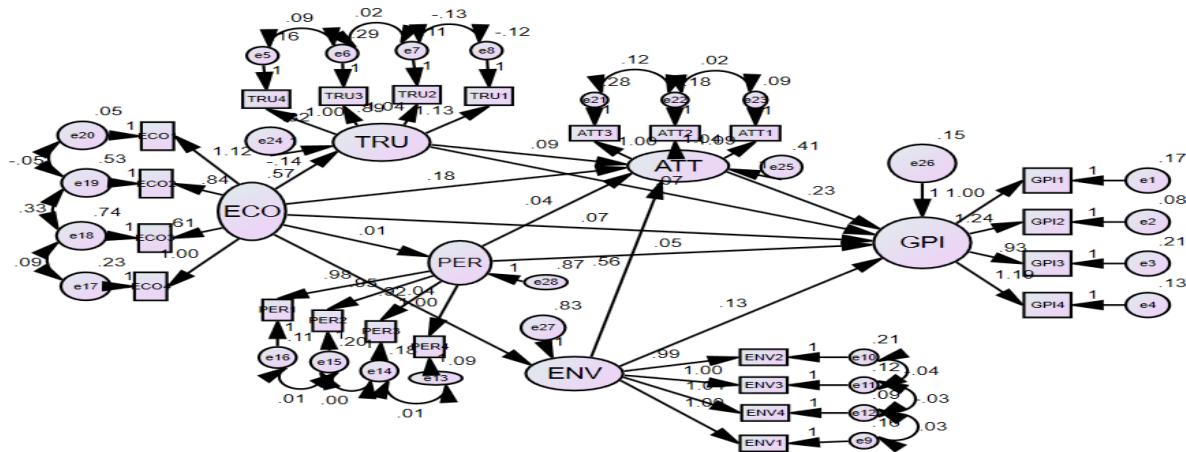
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Relationships			Coefficient	Standardized Coefficient	S.E	C.R.	P	Conclusion
PER		ECO	0.006	0.005	0.048	0.123	0.902	H2a: Rejected
TRU	<---	ECO	-0.139	-0.115	0.040	-3.483	***	H1a: Supported
ENV	<---	ECO	0.041	0.034	0.045	0.921	0.357	H3a: Rejected
ATT	<---	PER	0.043	0.049	0.031	1.379	0.168	H2b: Rejected
ATT	<---	TRU	0.087	0.095	0.023	3.725	***	H1b: Supported
ATT	<---	ECO	0.183	0.167	0.034	5.383	***	H4a: Supported
ATT	<---	ENV	0.556	0.609	0.033	16.635	***	H3b: Supported
GPI	<---	ATT	0.231	0.386	0.027	8.455	***	H4b: Supported
GPI	<---	ENV	0.133	0.244	0.023	5.714	***	H3c: Supported
GPI	<---	ECO	0.071	0.108	0.022	3.273	0.001	H5: Supported
GPI	<---	PER	0.052	0.097	0.017	3.083	0.002	H2c: Supported
GPI	<---	TRU	0.065	0.120	0.018	3.682	***	H1c: Supported

Note: \*\*\*Significant at 1 percent (All t-tests are one-tailed).

(Source: The researcher’s collecting data and SPSS 20.0, Amos)

Table 2 showed that column  $p < 0.01$  with significance level 0.01 and column “Conclusion” H2a: Rejected; H1a: Supported; H3a: Rejected; H2b: Rejected; H1b: Supported; H4a: Supported; H3b: Supported; H4b: Supported; H3c: Supported; H5: Supported; H2c: Supported and H1c: Supported. This showed that five factors affecting directly the Green Purchase Intention (GPI) with significance level 0.01. Chi-square=842.830;  $df=204$ ;  $p=0.000$ ; Chi-square/ $df=4.132$ ; GFI=0.918; TLI=0.958; CFI=0.966; RMSEA=0.063.



(Source: The researchers processed by SPSS 20.0 and Amos)

**FIGURE 3**  
**THE STRUCTURAL MODEL SHOWING THE STRUCTURAL LINKAGE BETWEEN ECO, TRU, PER, ATT, ENV AND GPI**

Figure 3 showed that five factors affecting directly the Green Purchase Intention (GPI) with significance level 0.0. Five factors include: Attitude (ATT,  $\beta=0.386$ ), Environmental

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concern (ENV,  $\beta=0.244$ ), Trust (TRU,  $\beta=0.120$ ), Eco-labelling (ECO,  $\beta=0.108$ ) and Perceived value (PER,  $\beta=0.097$ ). This means that consumers are willing to pay more for green products, so many enterprises make efforts to invest in products that ensure green, clean factors and build green brands associated with sustainable development. Besides, consumers concern about health factors (Bertsch et al., 2016). Regardless of whether the rich or the poor think that health is the most important. Moreover, green consumption is being seen as a trend of human consumption when the environment becomes a major concern of many countries around the world. As consumers become more and more interested in the environment, they pay more attention to buy the products of environmentally friendly behavior. The number of people willing to pay more for eco-friendly products that recently shows that the market of environmentally friendly products is expanding (Enevoldsen, & Sovacool, 2016).

## CONCLUSIONS & MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

### Conclusion

Vietnam is facing the challenges of environmental protection and sustainable development in response to population growth, leading to increasing consumer demand of society. Therefore, the implementation and application of green consumption policies and green procurement in Vietnam to encourage sustainable production and consumption is a pressing need now. Moreover, Vietnamese income increases year by year so there are many consumers who are willing to pay more to buy products with environmentally friendly materials which are guaranteed to be green and clean. Besides, Vietnamese consumers are increasingly paying attention and attaching importance to the origin when choosing food. Accordingly, they prioritize products that are both good for health and limited to adverse environmental and ecological impacts. Therefore, enterprises are aiming at green, clean production processes, ensuring food safety that always have a better competitive advantage, gaining a higher market share to meet consumer's need by (Stamatios et al., 2018). The result of this study found that five factors affecting directly the Green Purchase Intention (GPI) with significance level 0.01. Attitude ( $\beta=0.386$ ), Environmental concern ( $\beta=0.244$ ), Trust ( $\beta=0.120$ ), Eco-labelling ( $\beta=0.108$ ) and Perceived value ( $\beta=0.097$ ). This study is to find out Attitude ( $\beta=0.386$ ) affected the strongest in five factors with significance level 0.01 and three factors (Environmental concern, Eco-labelling, Trust) affecting indirectly the Green Purchase Intention (GPI) with significance level 0.01. Besides, (Rawashdeh, 2015) studied that Attitude ( $\beta=0.276$ ), Environmental concern ( $\beta=0.145$ ), Trust ( $\beta=0.221$ ), Eco-labelling ( $\beta=0.118$ ) and Perceived value ( $\beta=0.087$ ) affecting directly the green purchase intention with significance level 0.01. Finally, the research contributions improve consumers behaviours-the most important object in green consumption. It is consistent in consumption, choose products/services wisely and towards the environment. Because the needs of major consumers are the research and development direction of enterprises. Consumers have green demand; enterprises will produce green. The researchers had managerial implications following.

## Managerial Implications

Green consumption is being seen as the consumer trend of the 21<sup>st</sup> century when the environment becomes a major concern of many countries around the world. Therefore, Vietnam should continue to promote green consumption in four above mentioned Cities. The researchers have managerial implications following: (1) Change people's perceptions of environmental issues. Local authorities need to actively communicate in order to help people become aware of the dangers of environmental issues such as green production purchasing, decline in natural resources and biodiversity, waste pollution and noise. Meanwhile, green shopping and green consumption have benefits such as improving safety and health for people and communities; reduce the use of energy and natural resources; develop new green products, more environmentally friendly products. Besides, Green shopping promotes the recycling of waste, from collection, sorting to production and market development using recycled products not only saving consumers money but also contribute to environmental protection. (2) Local authorities need to strictly control the use of environmentally harmful energy sources such as firewood, honeycomb, cultivated green products especially limiting burning and burning straw in residential areas and wings. Copper after harvest will cause dust to smoke and to be harmful to the health of the people in the surrounding area. Besides, it is necessary to mobilize and encourage high-income people to research and apply this energy source in cultivating green products, both saving resources and protecting the environment and promoting green consumption for the capital. (3) Propaganda guides people to use water in the most economical way, limiting the shortage of drinking water in the summer and providing information about the harmful effects of water waste on the environment and improving the usage of green products. In addition to saving family expenses, water savings also help prevent exhaustion of groundwater resources and prevent water pollution in the basins. (4) Local authorities needs to support by encouraging and subsidizing the waste collection service providers; building a complete waste collection, transportation, treatment and recycling system, in which investment in concentrated garbage dumps is required to ensure stable and long-term collection activities. (5) Consumers tend to believe in manufacturers and government agencies. Therefore, government agencies should issue regulations to build and implement clean food programs, Organic foods (organic food production), minimize or label them. Organic products that have the effect of genetically modified technology. There is a strict regulation on quality control, building a formal legal framework for green consumption and consumer protection. attention should be paid to investment in new technology research and development into green products. Enterprises have diversification, quality assurance, building a reputable business image, commitment in green production activities and minimize environmental risks; reduce serious environmental impact to ensure consumer trust in green products, no pesticides and no hormones.

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