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TỔNG QUAN TÌNH HÌNH NGHIÊN CỨU CÁC YẾU TỐ ẢNH HƯỞNG ĐẾN KHOẢNG CÁCH GIỮA Ý ĐỊNH SỬ DỤNG VÀ HÀNH VI TIÊU DÙNG CỦA KHÁCH HÀNG ĐỐI VỚI SẢN PHẨM XANH

Phạm Khánh Linh¹, Nguyễn Thị Hương Quỳnh, Bùi Như Quỳnh, Vũ Yến Phương,
Khổng Thu Trang

Sinh viên K61 CLC Kinh tế Đối ngoại – Viện Kinh tế và Kinh doanh Quốc tế

Trường Đại học Ngoại thương, Hà Nội, Việt Nam

Nguyễn Thị Hồng Vân

Giảng viên Khoa Quản trị kinh doanh

Trường Đại học Ngoại thương, Hà Nội, Việt Nam

Tóm tắt

Mặc dù người tiêu dùng ngày càng thể hiện thái độ tích cực đối với các sản phẩm bền vững, tuy nhiên vẫn còn tồn tại những rào cản đáng kể ngăn cản việc chuyển đổi những ý định này thành hành vi mua hàng thực tế. Mục tiêu của nghiên cứu này là tổng hợp các yếu tố và mô hình được sử dụng trong các nghiên cứu liên quan đến khoảng cách giữa ý định và hành vi thực tế của người tiêu dùng trong việc mua sắm quần áo bền vững, từ đó đề xuất hướng nghiên cứu trong tương lai về chủ đề này. Để đạt được mục tiêu trên, nhóm nghiên cứu của chúng tôi đã tiến hành tổng quan các nghiên cứu về hành vi tiêu dùng bền vững trong 23 năm qua (từ năm 2002 đến 2024). Phân tích tập trung vào việc xác định và đánh giá các yếu tố ảnh hưởng đến khoảng cách giữa ý định và hành vi mua hàng thực tế trong bối cảnh sản phẩm bền vững, cũng như các mô hình được sử dụng để đo lường các yếu tố này. Kết quả cho thấy các yếu tố ảnh hưởng chính có thể được phân loại dựa trên các lý thuyết như Thuyết hành động hợp lý (TRA), Lý thuyết hành vi hoạch định (TPB), Lý thuyết Giá trị - Niềm tin - Chuẩn mực (VBN) và Lý thuyết lập luận hành vi (BRT). Phương pháp mô hình cấu trúc tuyến tính (SEM) và Hồi quy thường được sử dụng để đánh giá tác động của các yếu tố này.

Từ khóa: khoảng cách ý định-hành vi, tiêu dùng bền vững, tiêu dùng xanh, mua hàng xanh

¹ Author's Contact: k61.2212150103@ftu.edu.vn

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH ON FACTORS AFFECTING THE GAP BETWEEN INTENTION AND BEHAVIOR OF CUSTOMER TOWARDS GREEN PRODUCTS

Abstract

While consumers increasingly express positive attitudes towards green products, significant barriers prevent the transition of these intentions into actual purchasing actions. The objective of this study is to synthesize the factors and models used in research related to the gap between consumer intention and actual behavior in purchasing green clothing, thereby proposing directions for future studies in this field. To achieve this goal, our research team conducted a review of studies on green consumption behavior over the past 23 years (from 2002 to 2024). The analysis focuses on identifying and analyzing factors that influence the gap between consumer intentions and actual purchasing behavior in the context of green products, as well as the models used to measure these factors. The findings suggest that key influencing factors can be categorized into those developed from the The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), The Value - Belief - Norms Theory (VBN), and Behavioral Reasoning Theory (BRT). The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and Regression approach is frequently employed to assess the impact of these factors.

Keywords: intention-behavior gap, green consumption, green consumption, green purchasing

1. Introduction

The growing awareness of environmental sustainability has led to an increasing intention to green products. However, despite this positive trend, there remains a significant gap between intention and actual purchasing behavior. Many consumers express willingness to adopt eco-friendly alternatives, yet their actions often do not align with their stated preferences. In Vietnam, rapid economic growth and social development have significantly improved living standards, increasing consumer spending. As disposable incomes rise, individuals have greater opportunities to explore and invest in green products. However, despite the growing interest in green consumption, several challenges hinder the widespread adoption of eco-friendly products. Understanding the factors contributing to this gap is essential for businesses, policymakers, and researchers aiming to promote green consumption and encourage environmentally responsible behavior. This study aims to provide a comprehensive review of existing research on the key factors affecting the intention-behavior gap in green consumption. By synthesizing previous findings and theoretical models, we aim to offer insights and policy recommendations that can help bridge this gap and foster more green consumer behavior.

2. Research Methodology

The purpose of this study is to: first, review current empirical research, identify, and systematize the different factors affecting the gap between the green buying intention and actual

behavior, and second, examine the influence extent of each factor. The following sections provide an explanation of the approach used for this literature review.

2.1. Scope

This study reviews empirical research on green buying intention and behaviour by consumers that was published in reputable academic publications over a 23-year period, from January 1, 2002, to December 31, 2024. This study solely concentrates on research that attempts to identify the different elements influencing the gap between green buying intention and actual behavior. Research examining the impact of demographic variables is beyond the scope of the publication.

2.2. Articles selection

The data collection method involves looking for documents in scholarly databases including ResearchGate, Elsevier, ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, and Emerald. The keywords used include "Green purchasing," "intention-behavior gap," "green consumption," and "green consumption."

The data analysis method includes: Analysis of the content of selected documents to identify factors influencing the gap between the green buying intention and actual behavior; classify factors based on model origin (TRA, TPB, VBN, BRT); synthesize the research results of different authors on each factor; identify and systematize the results of empirical studies and evaluate the level of influence of each factor on the green consumption intention - behavior gap.

The results and findings will be presented below.

3. Research Findings

3.1. Summary of factors affecting the gap between green intention and behaviour

Through reviewing literature from various reputable sources, the research team has systematized the factors affecting the gap between green intention and consumption. The results are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Summary of factors affecting the gap between green intention and behaviour

No.	Factors	Impact	Research
1	Environmental Concern (Concern about the environment, environmental awareness, environmental consciousness, responsibility)	+	Magnusson et al. (2003) Alamsyah et al. (2020) Nguyen et al. (2021) Ogiemwonyi et al. (2022) Al-Mamun et al. (2024)
2	Social Influence & Norms	+	Gossling, S. et al. (2005) Johnstone & Tan (2015)

No.	Factors	Impact	Research
	(Social norms, social influence, willingness to comply, personal norms, organizational trust)		Jung et al.(2020) Kour, M. (2024)
3	Behavioral Control & Intentions (Perceived behavioral control, green behavioral control, green consumption intention, green self-identity)	+	Carrington et al. (2010) Huynh, H.P.T. (2019) Al-Mamun et al. (2024) Hong et al. (2024) Hong, Y., Al Mamun, A., Yang, Q., et al. (2024)
4	Trust & Perception (Trust in eco-labels, advertising trust, organizational trust, perception of information, corporate environmental friendliness, green product trust)	+	Fotopoulos, C. and Krystallis, A. (2002) Hughner et al. (2007) Liu, X. et al. (2012) Johnstone & Tan (2015) Nguyen et al. (2021) Ogiemwonyi et al. (2022) Alwis et al. (2022) Al-Mamun et al. (2024) Hong, Y., Al Mamun, A., Yang, Q., et al. (2024)
5	Economic & Price Factors (Perceived economic risk, perceived aesthetic risk, price sensitivity, high price perception, awareness of green price)	-	Magnusson et al. (2003) Hughner et al. (2007) Johnstone & Tan (2015) Kumar & Ghodeswar (2015) Alamsyah et al. (2020) Jung et al. (2021) Ogiemwonyi et al. (2022) Al-Mamun et al. (2024)
6	Availability & Convenience (Availability of green products, product accessibility, special needs,	+	Magnusson et al. (2003) Hughner et al. (2007) Johnstone & Tan (2015)

No.	Factors	Impact	Research
	convenience, time, financial capability)		Kumar & Ghodeswar (2015) Alamsyah et al. (2020) Jung et al. (2021) Ogiemwonyi et al. (2022) Al-Mamun et al. (2024)
7	Consumer Effectiveness & Motivation (Perceived consumer effectiveness, personal motivation, ethical values, moral obligation, drive for environmental responsibility)	+	Gossling, S. et al. (2005) Krystallis, A. et al. (2008) Johnstone & Tan (2015) Kumar and Ghodeswar (2015) Nguyen et al. (2019) Kour, M. (2024)
8	Perceived Quality & Benefits (Green perceived quality, product value, perceived benefits of organic products, health benefits, environmental benefits)	+	Fotopoulos, C. and Krystallis, A. (2002) Hughner et al. (2007) Krystallis, A. et al. (2008) Johnstone & Tan (2015) Kumar & Ghodeswar (2015) Alamsyah et al. (2020) Al-Mamun et al. (2024)
9	Knowledge & Awareness (Knowledge of environmental issues, knowledge of green labeling, awareness of green packaging, environmental knowledge)	+	Young et al. (2010) Kumar & Ghodeswar (2015) Alamsyah et al. (2020) Nguyen et al. (2021) Ogiemwonyi et al. (2022) Al-Mamun et al. (2024)

Source: The author's summary

The choice to go for green products is influenced by a mix of factors tied to our psychology, society, and economic situations. While traditional models like the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) focus on attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, more recent research has broadened these ideas to capture the special challenges of green

consumption. For example, environmental concern and awareness of green labeling are key motivators that help people understand the ecological impact of their choices and enable them to make purchases that align with their values (Ogiemwonyi et al., 2022; Al-Mamun et al., 2024). Also important is trust in eco-labels and perceptions of companies' environmental practices, which help reduce doubts about green claims and boost consumers' confidence when buying (Pino et al., 2012; Park & Lin, 2024). Behavioral aspects, such as green self-identity and perceived consumer effectiveness, further influence buying intentions by linking individual actions to larger environmental benefits (Carrington et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2024). Still, economic factors like price sensitivity and fear of economic risk can often set these positive drivers back, especially in markets where price matters most (Magnusson et al., 2003; Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015). To tackle these obstacles, scholars have modified frameworks like TAM by including elements like perceived quality of organic products and health benefits, making them more relevant to green products (Alamsyah et al., 2020; Al-Mamun et al., 2024). These tweaks emphasize the importance of balancing universal psychology ideas with real-world economic conditions, ensuring these models are not only solid in theory but also useful in practice.

Across the globe, studies on green product consumption show that there are major differences in what drives people based on their cultural, economic, and infrastructure contexts. In wealthier countries, ethical values and moral obligations are often the main motivators, boosted by strong regulations and easier access to eco-friendly options (Hartmann et al., 2005; White et al., 2019). On the flip side, in emerging markets, things like financial ability and product availability take center stage, where lacking distribution networks and high prices can hold back green adoption (Jung et al., 2021; Alamsyah et al., 2020). Younger people, especially those aged 18 to 40, are now key players in this movement, driven by a stronger sense of environmental awareness and their familiarity with sustainability stories (Nguyen et al., 2021; Ogiemwonyi et al., 2022). In Vietnam, studies reveal this contrast: urban areas tend to focus on health benefits and trust in organic labels, while rural regions struggle with things like limited access to green products and price sensitivity (Al-Mamun et al., 2024). This kind of context-sensitive approach shows up in incorporating social influence and trust in organizations into models, reflecting collective decision-making in group-oriented cultures (Wang et al., 2020; Zhao et al., 2010).

3.2. *Summary of models used in studying the gap between green intention and behaviour*

Through reviewing literature from various reputable sources, the research team has systematized the models used in studying the gap between green intention and consumption. The results are presented in the following table:

Table 2. Summary of models used in studying the gap between green intention and behaviour

No.	Name	Method used	Research
1	The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)	Regression, Linear Regression, SEM, PLS-SEM	Magnusson et al. (2003), Liu et al. (2012), Hassan et al. (2014), Huynh (2019), Rausch and Kopplin (2021)

No.	Name	Method used	Research
2	The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)	Logistic and OLS Regression, Linear regression, SEM, PLS-SEM, CB-SEM, SPSS	Padel and Foster (2005), Carrington et al. (2010), Zhu et al. (2013), Hassan et al. (2014), Octav-Ionut (2015), Huynh (2019), Nekmahmud and Fekete-Farkas (2020), Rausch and Kopplin (2021), Nguyen et al. (2021), Ogiemwonyi (2022), Alwis and Ariyaratna (2022)
3	Value - Belief - Norms Theory (VBN)	SPSS, SEM	Gossling et al. (2005), Octav-Ionut (2015)
4	Behavioral Reasoning Theory (BRT)	CB-SEM	Claudy et al. (2013), Sahu et al., (2020)

Source: The author's summary

The theoretical models on behavior and behavioral intention have been developed to explain the gap between consumers' intentions and their actual behavior. In green product research, this gap becomes particularly notable as many consumers express intentions to purchase environmentally friendly products but fail to translate these intentions into actual purchasing behavior. Four key models commonly used in research on the intention-behavior gap are: Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Value-Belief-Norm Theory (VBN), and Behavioral Reasoning Theory (BRT).

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) suggests that a person's behavior is shaped by their intention to carry out the behavior, which is influenced by their attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). This intention is driven by two key factors: the person's attitude toward the behavior (their overall assessment of performing it) and subjective norms (the perceived expectations of significant others regarding their behavior). In general, people are more likely to have strong intentions to act if they view the behavior positively and believe that important others think they should perform it. The importance of these two factors can vary across different behaviors and groups. However, some studies highlight a limitation of this theory: behavioral intention does not always result in actual behavior. This critique led to the development of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which incorporates the role of non-volitional factors in influencing behavior (Mimiaga et al., 2009).

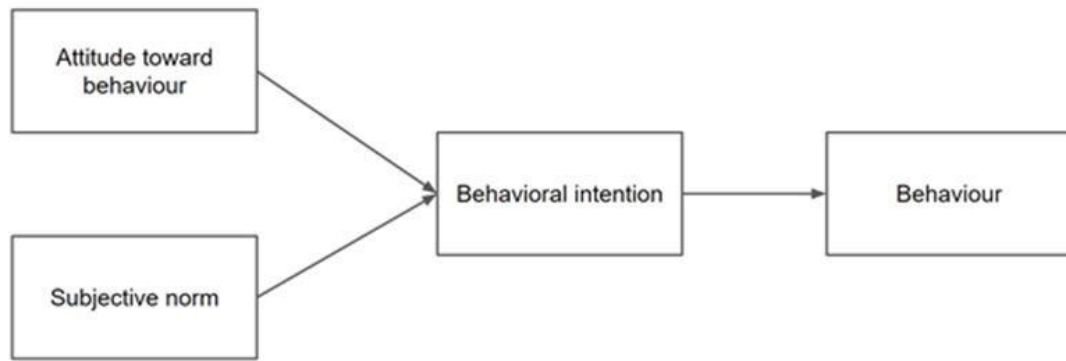


Figure 1. Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) model

Source: Fishbein & Ajzen (1975)

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is an extension of the commonly used Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). According to this theory, three proximal constructs - attitudes toward the behavior (positive or adverse effects of the behavior), subjective norms (perceived social pressure to participate in or withdraw from the behavior), and perceived behavioral control (perceived ability to perform the behavior) - have an impact on intentions toward a behavior. This model assumes a direct relationship between behavior and both intention and perceived behavioral control. It is believed that intentions to engage in an activity are influenced by a combination of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Icek Ajzen, 1985). In terms of studying the gap between green intention and consumption, TRA and TPB are the most used models, regarding the factors they included. Researchers use both the original TPB model and their own modified version of it based on the crucial aim of their research, e.g. Rausch and Kopplin (2021) added perceived environmental knowledge, environmental concern, greenwashing concern, perceived economic risk and perceived aesthetic risk into the original TPB model in the attempt to study about the gap in the context of clothing. Nekmahmud and Fekete-Farkas (2020), Ogiemwonyi (2022), and various researchers have used the base TPB in their own way, indicating that this model is adaptable and worldwide-approved.

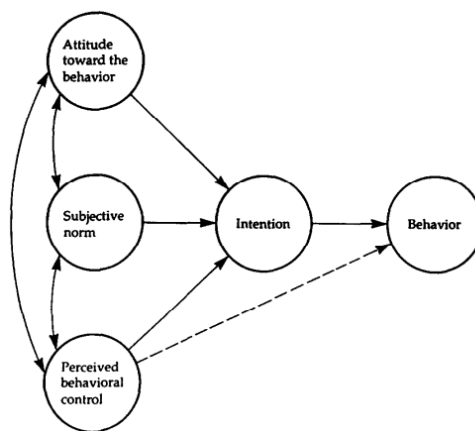


Figure 2. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) model

Source: Icek Ajzen (1991)

Value - Belief - Norms Theory (VBN)

According to the Value - Belief - Norms Theory, or VBN, green behaviors occur when an awareness of the consequences activates one's personal norms, or emotions of moral obligation to carry out or avoid from specific behaviors. A person's ecological perspective, which is influenced by their values, has an impact on this kind of awareness (Stern, 2000).

Additionally, the Value-Belief-Norm Theory lists three primary values: Green behavior has a stronger connection with: 1) biospheric and 2) altruistic values (both of which are regarded as self-transcendent), and 3) egoistic (or self-enhancement) values, which are more strongly associated with negative green behavior. When self-transcendent values are activated in a particular situation, connected to one's self-concept, and backed by cognitive reasoning, people will generally be more likely to act upon them. To put it another way, most people would be more motivated to take green action if they had internalized or self-determined motivations (Jen et al., 2020). In the context of studying the green gap between intention and behaviour, although this model is not the most popular one, some of the previous generation researchers used this model to conduct the research.

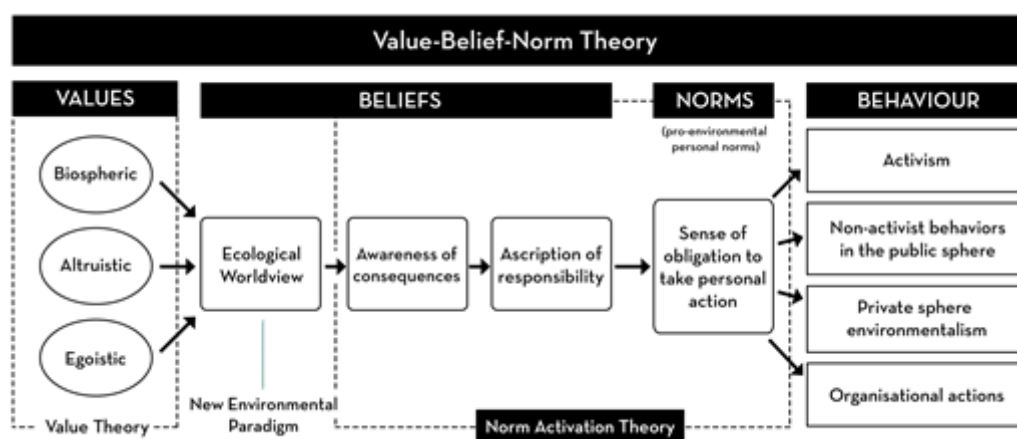


Figure 3. The Value - Belief - Norms (VBN) model

Source: Stern (2000)

Behavioral Reasoning Theory (BRT)

Behavioral Reasoning Theory (BRT) identifies the connection between beliefs or values, reasons (both for and against), broad motivators (such as attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control), intentions, and behavior (Westaby, 2005). First, it includes two key factors—reasons for and reasons against—offering a more detailed explanation of how people make decisions. These reasons are not simply opposites but represent two different perspectives that influence intentions and behavior. Second, because reasons are context-specific, they provide valuable contextual insights. Third, behavioral reasoning theory introduces additional cognitive pathways through reasons (both for and against) to better understand behavior and decision-making. Finally, it emphasizes the role of values and beliefs in predicting reasons, intentions, and behavior (Sahu et al., 2020).

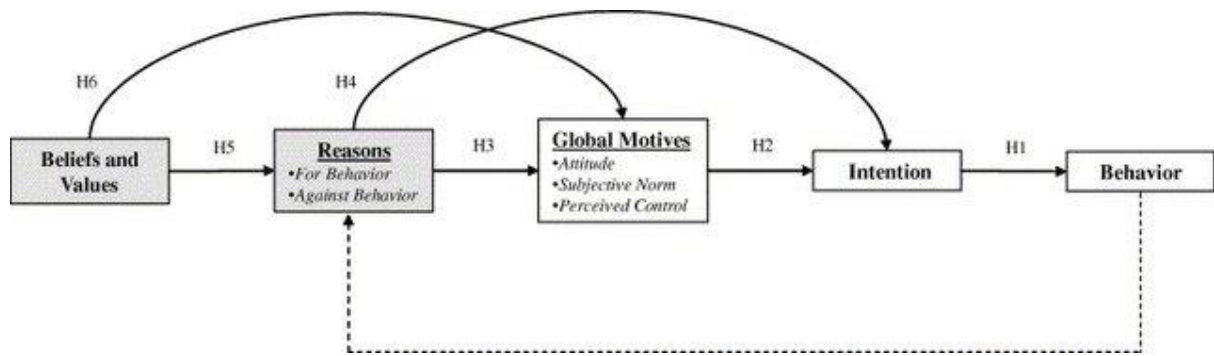


Figure 4. Behavioral Reasoning Theory (BRT) model

Source: Westaby (2005)

In conclusion, each model has its own strengths and limitations when analyzing the intention-behavior gap for green products. Therefore, several previous studies have combined these models with appropriate modifications to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the intention-behavior gap. Carrington et al. (2010) extended the TPB model by incorporating implementation intentions, actual behavioral control, and situational context to address what they termed the "ethical purchasing gap." Their modified framework recognized that consumers often fail to translate ethical intentions into behavior due to situational contexts and habit formation processes that weren't adequately captured in the original TPB. Claudy et al. (2013) extended BRT by identifying distinct "reasons for" and "reasons against" green technology adoption, demonstrating that barriers often have stronger predictive power for behavior than motivations. These modified frameworks provide more nuanced insights into the complex factors creating the persistent gap between consumers' green intentions and actual purchasing behavior. Moreover, Rausch and Kopplin (2021) expanded the TRA framework by incorporating well-established concepts from green literature (perceived environmental knowledge and environmental concerns) along with new constructs identified from earlier exploratory research (including concerns about greenwashing, perceived economic risk, and perceived aesthetic risk),...

3.3. Discussion

Due to the diversity of factors affecting the intention-behavior gap in purchasing green clothing, many previous studies may not have fully encompassed all relevant factors or developed a comprehensive theoretical framework. Several factors may remain unexplored yet play a critical role in narrowing the gap. To enhance research in this field, future studies could focus on the following directions:

First of all, it is essential to thoroughly understand the characteristics of the research context and subjects. Factors such as the growth of the local clothing industry, consumer habits and perceptions regarding green clothing, and the degree of urbanization should be carefully considered. The application of theoretical models from international research should be adjusted to cultural and economic nuances in each specific market to ensure more accurate results.

Secondly, future research should confidently integrate models or propose new influencing factors. Instead of relying solely on traditional factors, additional factors like government policy support, supply chain transparency, and community-driven initiatives should be combined to promote green purchasing behavior. Factors synthesized from previous studies may not be sufficient to achieve research objectives these days. However, new models should still have a solid theoretical or reliable foundation to ensure validity and significance.

Thirdly, policy and strategy development through collaboration could make a big step. Encouraging cooperation among policymakers, clothing enterprises, and non-governmental organizations is essential for building a green clothing ecosystem. Policies such as tax incentives for green clothing businesses, public education on eco-friendly clothing, and the promotion of circular economy models can help improve consumer purchasing behavior.

In summary, narrowing the intention-behavior gap in green clothing purchasing requires the development of multidimensional models, supportive policies, and collaboration tailored to cultural and social contexts. These solutions will not only improve consumer awareness of green clothing but also drive the industry toward more long-term development in the future.

4. Conclusion

Based on the authors' synthesized results, it can be confirmed that over the past 23 years, research on the gap between consumers' intentions to purchase green products and their actual purchasing behavior worldwide has been diverse and extensive. Models such as TRA (The Theory of Reasoned Action), TPB (Theory of Planned Behavior), VBN (Value - Belief - Norms theory), and BRT (Behavioral Reasoning Theory) are commonly used; however, limitations emerge when a single model is applied across different contexts and research subjects. Therefore, many studies have boldly combined various models and introduced new factors beyond the original frameworks to better fit specific contexts and target groups.

Given the complexity and diversity of factors influencing the intention-behavior gap in green purchasing, it is evident that some factors may still be unexplored but play a critical role in bridging this gap. Future research should aim to gain a deeper understanding of the research context and subjects while carefully adjusting theoretical models to fit the unique cultural and economic nuances of each market for more accurate results.

From a practical perspective, it is crucial to develop policies that promote sustainability, foster collaboration between stakeholders, and enhance consumer education. These measures will not only contribute to closing the intention-behavior gap but also support the broader development of the green clothing industry.

In conclusion, the research highlights the need for adaptable and multidimensional models, supported by targeted policies and stakeholder cooperation, to better understand and bridge the gap between consumers' intentions and actual behavior in green clothing purchasing. This study provides a foundation for future research to explore innovative solutions and further contribute to the promotion of green consumer practices.

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