

## Modeling Green Consumption Decisions in Iran: An Analysis of Consumer Readiness, Novelty Seeking and Economic Constraints

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### ABSTRACT

Green consumption is a decision problem in which pro-environmental preferences must be reconciled with structural and financial constraints, yet its drivers remain poorly understood in Muslim-majority emerging markets. Iran presents a striking paradox: Islamic teachings explicitly prohibit wastefulness, but national environmental performance ranks among the weakest in the world. This study models the psychological drivers of green consumption decisions among Iranian consumers by extending the Theory of Planned Behavior with environmental concern and consumer novelty seeking. Cross-sectional survey data from 405 consumers were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling. All four predictors significantly influenced green consumption behavior: consumer novelty seeking carried the strongest path, followed closely by social influence, environmental concern and perceived behavioral control, together explaining 38.2 percent of the variance. Respondents scored significantly above the scale midpoint on every construct, indicating strong psychological readiness. Iranian Muslim consumers therefore approach green products as modern innovations signaling a progressive identity rather than acting from religious obligation alone, while communal expectations rooted in Islamic principles continue to shape their choices. Perceived behavioral control was the weakest predictor, reflecting severe affordability barriers. Decision support for sustainable consumption in such markets must therefore relieve structural constraints alongside motivational appeals.

### 1. Introduction

In recent decades, environmental degradation has emerged as one of the most pressing global challenges, prompting scholars and policymakers to examine the factors that drive or inhibit sustainable consumption across diverse cultural and economic contexts. Every act of green consumption involves a decision made under constraints: consumers must weigh environmental

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values, social expectations, product novelty, and affordability, often with incomplete information and limited perceived control. While substantial research has investigated these decisions in Western and developed economies, considerably less attention has been devoted to how consumers in Muslim-majority societies navigate environmental choices within their specific religious, cultural, and economic contexts. This gap is significant, given that Muslim consumers represent approximately 1.8 billion people worldwide and that Islamic teachings contain explicit guidance on environmental stewardship, resource conservation, and responsible consumption that could shape green behavior patterns [1].

Iran provides a particularly relevant context for examining this phenomenon. Because Islamic principles are formally embedded in state structures and legal systems, Iran offers a setting in which religious values may influence consumer behavior. The Qur'an emphasizes stewardship of the earth (*khilafah*), moderation (*i'tidal*), the prohibition of wastefulness (*israf*) and extravagance (*tabdhir*), and the prevention of corruption (*fasad*) in the natural world. These principles, articulated in verses such as "Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of what the hands of men have wrought" (Ar-Rum 30:41) and "eat and drink and be not extravagant; surely He does not love the extravagant" (Al-A'raf 7:31) [2], provide a moral framework that may encourage Muslim consumers to adopt green practices aligned with ecological responsibility and spiritual accountability [3].

At the same time, Iran faces a notable paradox: despite this tradition of environmental responsibility, the country's actual environmental performance remains well below global standards. According to the 2024 Environmental Performance Index [4], Iran scores only 17.0 out of 100 on the waste recovery rate indicator, placing it among the lower-performing countries globally. Its performance is comparable to that of Romania (17.1) and Cyprus (16.6) and remains far below that of leading countries such as Switzerland (100), Denmark (99.9), and Germany (98.9) [5]. National assessments indicate that only about 7 percent of municipal waste is separated at source and roughly 13 percent is recycled nationwide, well below the recycling rates of 30 to 70 percent achieved in many advanced economies [6, 7]. Iran also ranks among the top 20 countries worldwide in terms of plastic waste generation, producing approximately 4 million tonnes annually, which reflects high consumption levels relative to the country's recycling capacity [8].

This gap between environmental attitudes and infrastructure raises important questions about green consumption decisions in the Iranian context. Are Iranian consumers motivated to engage in green consumption despite structural barriers? Which psychological and social factors influence their choices? How do Islamic values interact with contemporary consumer motives such as novelty seeking and social influence? More importantly, do structural constraints, including limited recycling infrastructure, economic pressures resulting from international sanctions, and affordability barriers, hinder the translation of positive environmental attitudes into actual behavior?

The economic dimension of this paradox warrants particular attention. Iran's economic circumstances, characterized by sustained international sanctions, currency depreciation, and high inflation, create affordability constraints that may limit consumers' ability to act on their environmental values. Evidence concerning household affordability indicates that even basic sustainable technologies impose a substantial financial burden relative to Iranian incomes, thereby considerably limiting purchasing power for capital-intensive green investments [9, 10]. Even higher-income professionals, such as physicians and engineers, may face such constraints when investing in sustainable technologies [11, 12]. These conditions suggest that perceived behavioral control—the belief that an individual is capable of performing a particular green behavior—may be constrained by structural and financial barriers rather than being determined by attitudes alone.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) has been widely applied to environmental issues [13]. However, previous studies have rarely examined its constructs, or extensions thereof, within the context of Islamic marketing. This study connects the literature on green consumption behavior with the Islamic marketing framework. TPB provides the analytical foundation for examining how social influence rooted in religious values, together with perceived behavioral control, environmental concern, and consumer novelty seeking, affects Muslim consumers' decisions to choose green products. Given that the cultural and social structures of Muslim-majority countries may be influenced by Islamic moral and religious values, examining these relationships can provide further insight into the individual and social motivations underlying green consumption decisions in these contexts.

This study makes four main contributions. First, it extends previous research on green consumption in Iran by incorporating consumer novelty seeking as an additional predictor. While earlier studies have examined cognitive drivers such as environmental knowledge and moral obligation [14] or applied the basic TPB constructs [15], the present study broadens the theoretical framework by examining whether novelty seeking also influences green product choices among Iranian consumers. This extension addresses an underexplored aspect of Islamic marketing research, which has predominantly focused on tradition-oriented and moral motivations, while giving less attention to the possibility that consumers may perceive green products as innovations associated with responsible consumption. Second, by simultaneously examining a socially oriented pathway (social influence) and an individually oriented pathway (novelty seeking), the study provides a dual-pathway perspective on green consumption decisions in Iran. This approach enables the two dimensions to be considered within a single analytical framework rather than in isolation. Third, the study places the psychological determinants of green consumption within Iran's broader structural context by relating attitudinal drivers to environmental infrastructure and economic constraints. This perspective may help explain why positive pro-environmental attitudes do not necessarily translate into corresponding environmental outcomes at the national level. Fourth, the study provides recent empirical evidence from Iran's environmental and economic context in 2025, offering insight into green consumption behavior in the post-pandemic period amid increasing environmental pressures and economic constraints that may affect product availability and consumer priorities.

Data were collected through an online questionnaire administered to consumers of green products using an instrument published in the Mendeley Data repository [16]. Responses were measured using multi-item Likert scales and analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings may also have implications for policymakers and relevant institutions in other Muslim-majority countries. In particular, they provide evidence regarding the roles of social influence and perceived behavioral control in green consumption decisions and highlight the potential relevance of innovation-oriented framing when designing communication strategies and campaigns that respond to consumer expectations.

## **2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development**

This section reviews the theoretical foundations of the proposed model and develops the study's hypotheses. It first outlines TPB as the core framework for explaining green consumption decisions, then discusses how green consumption behavior has been conceptualized in Muslim societies. It subsequently examines each construct in the model (social influence, perceived behavioral control, environmental concern and consumer novelty seeking) and concludes by formulating the hypotheses tested here. Table 1 shows how the present study complements prior research by examining novelty-seeking motives alongside the traditional normative and cognitive factors in Iran's current environmental and economic context.

**Table 1**  
Comparison of TPB-based green consumption studies in Iran

| Study                       | Sample                      | TPB extensions                                                   | Dependent variable         | Key finding                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Abbasi <i>et al.</i> , [14] | Iranian consumers           | Environmental concern, environmental knowledge, moral obligation | Purchase intention         | Moral obligation and environmental knowledge significant; focus on cognitive and moral pathways                                               |
| Forati <i>et al.</i> , [15] | Residents of Qazvin         | None (standard TPB)                                              | Green consumption behavior | Attitude, subjective norms and PBC all significant; basic TPB sufficient                                                                      |
| Present study               | Iranian consumers (n = 405) | Environmental concern, consumer novelty seeking                  | Green consumption behavior | Consumer novelty seeking is the strongest path ( $\beta = 0.251$ ); dual pathway model (social and innovation); contemporary economic context |

### 2.1 Theory of Planned Behavior

In many studies the theory has been extended with complementary variables in order to explain complex environmental behaviors more fully [17, 18]. Comparable extensions have been applied to green electronic products and to Iranian consumers specifically [14, 19]. In this vein, environmental concern and consumer novelty seeking are added to the original model here to obtain a more comprehensive account of green consumption behavior in Iran.

According to TPB, attitudes and social pressures play a decisive role in environmental behaviors. Religious beliefs and values can also influence consumer orientation toward green products [20]. Examining this issue in Muslim societies can therefore reveal new dimensions of green consumer decision-making.

### 2.2 Green Consumption Behavior in Muslim Societies

Consumer behavior refers to the decision-making process individuals undergo in selecting, purchasing, using and evaluating goods and services, a process influenced by attitudes, beliefs, values and personal and social characteristics. In recent years, as sensitivity to the social and environmental consequences of consumption has grown, researchers' attention has shifted from mere customer satisfaction toward responsible and sustainable consumption. Within this frame, consumer behavior is no longer limited to maximizing individual benefit but also involves alignment with ethical values, environmental concerns and social responsibility. One key manifestation of this shift is green consumption behavior, that is, consumers' tendency to choose products that cause minimal environmental harm throughout their life cycle and that are more socially responsible. Green products are typically characterized by efficient energy consumption, recyclability, reduced use of toxic materials and adherence to corporate social responsibility principles [21]. Green consumption behavior is not limited to purchasing but encompasses patterns of use, conservation, disposal and recycling, and is sometimes used interchangeably in the literature with sustainable consumption and responsible consumption.

Consumers have gradually come to realize that their choices affect the environment and therefore prefer green products over conventional ones even at higher cost and greater time investment [17]. Although the higher price of green products stems from production costs and environmental processes, appropriate provision of information can increase willingness to pay. Some studies show that consumers are willing to pay a premium [21], while others identify high prices, limited accessibility and mistrust as significant barriers to green purchase [19].

According to Islamic teachings, wastefulness and excessive consumerism are prohibited, with emphasis placed on balance in consumption, contentment and sustainability [22], creating a moral framework that extends beyond individual transactions to broader considerations of sustainability and social responsibility. Consequently green consumption acquires a further dimension that can create powerful moral and religious motivations for green choices. In such a context green consumption behavior is viewed not only as a response to environmental concern but as a form of moral and religious action aligned with Islamic principles of stewardship and moderation.

### *2.3 Extending Prior Research on Green Consumption in Iran*

TPB has been applied to green consumption in Iran before, but prior studies examined different combinations of constructs and focused on distinct aspects of consumer decision-making. Abbasi *et al.*, [14] extended TPB with environmental concern, environmental knowledge and moral obligation to predict green purchase intention among Iranian consumers, emphasizing cognitive and moral-evaluative pathways. Their focus on knowledge and moral duty reflects a view of green consumption as primarily an ethically motivated behavior that requires information and moral commitment. Forati *et al.*, [15] applied the standard three-component TPB framework (attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control) to predict actual green consumption behavior in Qazvin, showing that these classical predictors remain relevant in Iranian contexts. Their study did not, however, explore additional psychological drivers beyond the original TPB formulation.

The present study builds on and extends this foundation in three ways. First, it integrates consumer novelty seeking, a construct not previously examined in Iranian green consumption research, to capture the extent to which consumers view green products as novel, modern alternatives that align with a novelty-oriented self-concept. This addresses a theoretical gap: existing research emphasizes the moral and social duty dimensions of green consumption in Muslim societies and overlooks the possibility that Muslim consumers may also be motivated by the desire to adopt new products and express a progressive, environmentally conscious identity. In Muslim-majority countries experiencing rapid urbanization and generational change, younger consumers in particular may be drawn to green products not only because of religious teachings on stewardship but because such products represent modernity and global environmental consciousness [20].

Second, the study models social influence and consumer novelty seeking simultaneously alongside environmental concern and perceived behavioral control, which allows a test of whether Iranian consumers respond primarily to normative pressure, as emphasized in collectivist and religious cultural frameworks, or to novelty-oriented self-expression, as suggested by modernization and global consumer culture, or to both pathways in combination. Prior studies examined these dimensions separately or focused mainly on cognitive-moral factors, leaving unclear how traditional social-normative influences interact with contemporary novelty-seeking motives.

Third, the study was conducted in 2025 and therefore captures Iranian consumer behavior in a period marked by intensified environmental crises (severe air pollution, water scarcity, desertification), sustained economic sanctions affecting product availability and purchasing power, and post-pandemic shifts in health awareness and consumption priorities. These contextual changes mean that green consumption behavior in 2025 may differ substantively from the findings reported in studies conducted in 2018 to 2019, which makes updated empirical evidence both necessary and timely.

### *2.4 Social Influence and Green Consumption Behavior*

Subjective norms refer to the social influence individuals perceive regarding performance of a particular behavior [23]. In other words, subjective norms represent the perceived social pressure

exerted by others for an individual to behave in a way consistent with those others' views in a specific situation [24]. In the realm of green consumption, abundant evidence shows that perceived pressure from family, friends and reference groups can direct individuals toward environmentally friendly behavior, especially in collectivist and religious contexts where social approval carries high importance [24].

Various studies have demonstrated that social influence strengthens green consumption behavior directly [24, 25], an effect also reported for eco-friendly purchase intention under normative moderation [26]. Other work finds that the effect operates through purchase intention [15, 18, 19], including studies of perceived green product benefits and of electric vehicle adoption [27, 28]. Recent research in emerging markets confirms these patterns: Konalingam *et al.*, [29] found that religiosity enhances the relationship between personal norms and pro-environmental behavioral intentions in Sri Lanka, while Kumar [30] demonstrated that ethical obligation mediates the relationship between environmental concern and green purchase intention among young Indian consumers. In Muslim societies norms carry not only a social dimension but also moral and religious ones, manifesting as religious injunctions against wastefulness, corruption and destruction of the earth. It is therefore expected that in Iran social influence plays an important role in directing green consumption behavior.

H1: Social influence has a significant positive effect on green consumption behavior.

### 2.5 Perceived Behavioral Control and Green Consumption Behavior

Perceived behavioral control indicates the extent to which an individual sees performance of a behavior as within their capability; the construct reflects access to resources, opportunities and skills, and the absence of perceived barriers [23, 31]. In the context of green consumption, constraints such as the higher price of green products, limited accessibility or difficulty of use can prevent actual behavior even when positive attitudes and intentions exist [13]. Numerous studies report that when individuals feel they have control over their green behavior, through financial capability, accessibility and adequate information, they are more likely to purchase environmentally friendly products, either indirectly by influencing intention and then behavior [15, 32, 33] or directly [18]. The same indirect pathway has been reported for green electronic products and for millennial consumers in emerging markets [19, 34].

H2: Perceived behavioral control has a significant positive effect on green consumption behavior.

### 2.6 Environmental Concern and Green Consumption Behavior

Environmental concern is defined as the level of sensitivity and worry an individual holds about the state of the environment and the consequences of its degradation, rooted in that person's fundamental values [35, 36]. Studies show that environmental concern not only has a positive effect on green purchase intention but also increases willingness to pay more for environmentally friendly products, which raises demand for green products and encourages firms toward more sustainable production. Individuals with higher concern about environmental issues hold more positive attitudes toward green products and show greater willingness to participate in green behaviors such as purchasing environmentally friendly products, recycling and conserving resources [37]. Although some studies point to a gap between concern and behavior [19, 38], the literature indicates that environmental concern, directly or indirectly through purchase intention, is one of the main predictors of green consumption behavior [14, 27, 30]. Kumar [30], using structural equation modeling in India, found that the effect of environmental concern on green purchase intention was mediated by attitude and ethical obligation. Similarly, Arli *et al.*, [39], studying consumers in an emerging market, demonstrated that perceived consumer readiness significantly influences green

purchase intentions, which suggests that environmental concern must be coupled with perceived capability before it translates into actual behavior. In Muslim-majority societies environmental concern is rooted in Islamic teachings: the Qur'an emphasizes human stewardship of the earth (Al-Baqarah 2:30; Al-Hadid 57:7), prohibits corruption and environmental destruction (Al-A'raf 7:56) and forbids wastefulness and excessive consumerism (Al-A'raf 7:31) [2], thereby strengthening Muslims' moral responsibility for protecting nature. Research also shows that these religious values can increase environmental responsibility and concern about the consequences of degradation, reinforcing green behaviors [3, 40].

H3: Environmental concern has a significant positive effect on green consumption behavior.

### 2.7 Consumer Novelty Seeking and Green Consumption Behavior

Consumer novelty seeking, as a personality trait, indicates an individual's tendency to adopt and use new products, ideas and services [41]. Relatedly, innovativeness refers to individuals' desire to seek information about new products and demonstrates a cognitive motivation for learning and experiencing new things [28]. Because many green products are perceived as newer, different and sometimes riskier than conventional alternatives, innovative individuals are expected to be pioneers in adopting them. This pattern is particularly relevant in emerging markets where green products often constitute novel market offerings [39, 42]. Studies show that consumers with higher levels of individual innovativeness and novelty seeking display greater willingness to purchase green products and perceive those products as symbols of a responsible and environmentally conscious identity [38]. Sharma's [43] review confirms that consumer innovativeness is a key psychological driver of green purchase behavior across diverse market contexts.

H4: Consumer novelty seeking has a significant positive effect on green consumption behavior.

### 2.8 Islamic Religiosity and the TPB Framework

While TPB provides a general framework for understanding consumer behavior, its constructs operate within culturally embedded contexts in which religious values, social norms and institutional environments shape how attitudes translate into intentions and behavior. In Muslim-majority societies Islamic teachings provide a moral foundation that influences consumer orientation toward environmental responsibility, yet the intensity and manifestation of these influences vary across contexts because of differences in religious practice, policy frameworks and socio-economic conditions [20].

Islamic religiosity is understood as a lived pattern of attitudes, knowledge and values that shapes behavior and social practice [44]. Research on religiosity has been predominantly conducted in Western contexts, with most studies focusing on Christianity [45, 46]. Recent studies, however, have successfully applied TPB frameworks in Islamic and other religious contexts, demonstrating that trust, satisfaction and social influence operate distinctly within religious consumer behavior, where religious values mediate the relationship between attitudes and behavioral outcomes [47]. Konalingam *et al.*, [29], studying pro-environmental intentions in Sri Lanka with PLS-SEM, found that religiosity significantly moderates the relationship between personal norms and behavioral intentions. In Muslim-majority Malaysia, Vafaei-Zadeh *et al.*, [48] showed that environmental attitudes and perceived behavioral control significantly influence green electronics purchase intentions, which provides evidence that TPB constructs operate effectively in Islamic market contexts. In the literature religiosity is distinguished from religion itself and is typically described as a way of life that manifests in individuals' attitudes, knowledge and values [44, 49]. These beliefs and patterns of thinking in turn shape the behaviors and practices of both individuals and society [44]. In Muslim contexts higher levels of religiosity strengthen adherence to Islamic ethical norms,

discouraging irresponsible consumption and encouraging environmentally responsible choices. Islam places strong emphasis on moderation in consumption and avoidance of extravagance; consumption in Islam therefore cannot be separated from ethical considerations, and concepts such as ethical consumption, which have gained popularity in the West only recently, have been integral to Islamic teaching for centuries [50]. As a result, people with higher levels of Islamic religiosity tend to exhibit lower rates of behavior considered deviant, such as excessive or wasteful consumption [20].

Recent evidence from pro-environmental consumption, green information technology and ethical consumption research shows that more religious consumers tend to express stronger pro-environmental attitudes and greater willingness to engage in responsible consumption [20, 46]. Building on contingency theory and on TPB, Islamic religiosity can be conceptualized as a contextual factor that conditions how attitudes, social influence and perceived behavioral control translate into green consumption behavior [20, 51]. This helps explain differences in intention-behavior patterns among consumers who share the same religion but differ in the intensity of their religious commitment, as well as variation across countries with different religious, cultural and institutional contexts.

In Iran, Islamic principles are formally embedded in the state structure and legal system, creating an environment in which religious norms may shape social expectations and consumer behavior more directly. The influence of religious authorities, community-based social networks and collectivist cultural orientations may amplify the role of social influence in guiding green consumption decisions, so that Iranian consumers perceive green choices not only as personal decisions but as actions subject to collective evaluation and religious accountability. Iran also faces severe environmental challenges including air pollution, water scarcity and desertification, which may heighten environmental concern and create urgency around sustainable consumption [3, 40]. This research therefore contributes to the Islamic marketing literature by demonstrating that shared religious values provide a foundation for green consumption, but that the pathways through which those values influence behavior (whether social pressure, personal empowerment, environmental awareness or novelty seeking) are shaped by the broader institutional, cultural and environmental contexts in which consumers are embedded. Understanding these contextual variations is essential for developing effective, culturally sensitive green marketing strategies in diverse Islamic markets [1].

### **3. Methodology**

Consistent with prior TPB-based green consumption research, this study adopts a quantitative survey strategy using multi-item Likert scales to investigate social influence, perceived behavioral control, environmental concern, consumer novelty seeking and green consumption behavior. This section first explains the research design, then the sample and data collection procedure, the measurement instrument, the assessment of the measurement model and finally the analytical approach used to estimate the structural model.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study employs a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design. Building on TPB and extending it with environmental concern and consumer novelty seeking, it examines green consumption behavior among consumers in Iran. Data were collected through a standardized questionnaire administered to consumers interested in green products. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study before participation, written informed consent was obtained electronically, and participation was voluntary, anonymous and confidential. The study differs from prior TPB-based research in Iran [14, 15] in three respects. First, it includes consumer novelty seeking as a predictor, which has not been examined in previous Iranian green consumption studies. Second,

data collected in 2025 reflect consumer behavior in a substantially different economic and environmental context from that of studies conducted in 2018 to 2019, and therefore provide more contemporary evidence. Third, the study employs a validated instrument drawn from Islamic marketing research [16] that has been used successfully in another Muslim-majority country, which situates the findings within the broader Islamic marketing literature and enables future cross-cultural comparison.

### 3.2 Sample and Data Collection

Data were gathered in 2025 through an online questionnaire distributed to Iranian consumers of green products using non-probability convenience sampling. After removal of incomplete responses, 405 valid questionnaires were retained for analysis. The sample size comfortably exceeds the requirements implied by the inverse square root and ten-times rules for PLS-SEM with a maximum of four predictors of a single endogenous construct [52]. The realized sample skews young: 47.7 percent of respondents are under 30 years of age, which is consistent with the online recruitment channel and with the demographic profile of Iran's urban consumer population. The implications of this composition for generalisability are addressed in Section 5.7.

### 3.3 Measures

The data collection instrument is the standardized questionnaire designed by Ghani *et al.*, [16], originally administered in Malaysia in 2020. The same questionnaire was used for data collection in Iran in 2025. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The instrument covers social influence, perceived behavioral control, environmental concern, consumer novelty seeking and green consumption behavior. The number of items in each block was kept identical to the original version and no item was changed, deleted or replaced; only translation and localization were performed. Table 2 reports the full set of items used to operationalize the five latent constructs.

**Table 2**  
Research questionnaire items by construct

| Construct                    | No. | Item                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Perceived behavioral control | 1   | The decision whether or not to consume green products is within my control                                           |
|                              | 2   | For me, green purchasing is do-able                                                                                  |
|                              | 3   | I have the ability to make green purchases                                                                           |
|                              | 4   | I have the ability to engage in green practices                                                                      |
|                              | 5   | I believe that my decision to consume green products has a direct influence on the environment as a whole            |
| Social influence             | 1   | Most people around me think green purchasing is an effective way to save the earth                                   |
|                              | 2   | Most people who are important to me think engaging in green purchasing is good                                       |
|                              | 3   | My family highly values the environmental friendliness of a product                                                  |
|                              | 4   | People in my circle of friends highly value the environmental friendliness of a product                              |
| Environmental concern        | 1   | When deciding what to buy, consumers should balance the product's price against the best interest of the environment |
|                              | 2   | Those who consume more should be the most responsible in protecting the environment                                  |
|                              | 3   | Consumers should consider the environment as one of their stakeholders when making decisions                         |
|                              | 4   | To be environmentally responsible, consumers need to make purchases that are best for the environment                |
|                              | 5   | Consumers should be concerned about maintaining a good place to live                                                 |
|                              | 6   | Consumers should have an interest in the well-being of the community in which they live                              |

**Table 2**  
Continued

| Construct                  | No. | Item                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Consumer novelty seeking   | 1   | I often seek out information about new products and brands                                                                               |
|                            | 2   | I like to go to places where I will be exposed to information about new products and brands                                              |
|                            | 3   | I like magazines that introduce new brands                                                                                               |
|                            | 4   | I frequently look for new products and services                                                                                          |
|                            | 5   | I seek out situations in which I will be exposed to new and different sources of product information                                     |
|                            | 6   | I am continually seeking new product experiences                                                                                         |
|                            | 7   | When I go shopping, I find myself spending very little time checking out new products and brands (R)                                     |
|                            | 8   | I take advantage of the first available opportunity to find out about new and different products                                         |
| Green consumption behavior | 1   | I prefer purchasing energy-saving products (e.g. low-energy lamps, energy-efficient refrigerators)                                       |
|                            | 2   | I prefer purchasing water-saving products (e.g. water-saving shower heads or washing machines)                                           |
|                            | 3   | I prefer purchasing products free from chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) (e.g. CFC-free aerosol propellants, CFC-free inhalers)                 |
|                            | 4   | I prefer purchasing recycled paper products (e.g. recycled paper notepads, recycled facial tissue)                                       |
|                            | 5   | I prefer purchasing green or organic foods and vegetables (e.g. vegetables grown without chemicals, meat that does not contain hormones) |
|                            | 6   | I prefer purchasing environmentally friendly building materials (e.g. green roofing, bamboo flooring)                                    |
|                            | 7   | I prefer purchasing green furniture (e.g. bamboo or rattan furniture)                                                                    |
|                            | 8   | I make every effort to buy paper products made from recycled paper                                                                       |
|                            | 9   | When I purchase products, I always make a conscious effort to buy those that are low in pollutants                                       |
|                            | 10  | I try to buy products that can be recycled                                                                                               |
|                            | 11  | I make every effort to recycle paper                                                                                                     |
|                            | 12  | I make every effort to recycle plastic                                                                                                   |
|                            | 13  | I make every effort to recycle glass                                                                                                     |

### 3.4 Measurement Model Assessment

Following established PLS-SEM procedures [52], the measurement model was refined through iterative assessment of the outer loadings. Indicators loading below 0.40 were removed outright, and indicators loading between 0.40 and 0.70 were removed only where deletion raised composite reliability or average variance extracted above the recommended thresholds. Applying this rule, one item was deleted from perceived behavioral control (PBC1, loading 0.583), one from environmental concern (EC1, 0.496), one reverse-coded item from consumer novelty seeking (CNS7R, 0.213) and five from green consumption behavior (GC1 to GC5, loadings 0.487 to 0.620). The very low loading of the reverse-coded item is consistent with the known difficulties that reverse-coded items present in PLS-SEM.

One indicator, EC2, was retained despite a final loading of 0.563, because environmental concern already satisfied both the composite reliability threshold (0.866) and the average variance extracted threshold (0.568) with EC2 included, and because the item captures a distinct content domain (the responsibility of heavy consumers) that no other retained indicator represents. With this single exception, every retained indicator loads above 0.65 and most load above 0.70, which indicates that each item strongly represents its intended construct. Table 3 reports both the initial and the final loadings so that the purification process is fully transparent.

**Table 3**  
Initial and final outer loadings of the measurement model

| Item | Initial loading | Final loading | Item  | Initial loading | Final loading |
|------|-----------------|---------------|-------|-----------------|---------------|
| SI1  | 0.722           | 0.712         | CNS4  | 0.855           | 0.851         |
| SI2  | 0.764           | 0.751         | CNS5  | 0.852           | 0.852         |
| SI3  | 0.795           | 0.806         | CNS6  | 0.758           | 0.759         |
| SI4  | 0.783           | 0.790         | CNS7R | 0.213           | removed       |
| EC1  | 0.496           | removed       | CNS8  | 0.743           | 0.752         |
| EC2  | 0.583           | 0.563         | GC1   | 0.595           | removed       |
| EC3  | 0.797           | 0.810         | GC2   | 0.620           | removed       |
| EC4  | 0.840           | 0.859         | GC3   | 0.535           | removed       |
| EC5  | 0.771           | 0.773         | GC4   | 0.487           | removed       |
| EC6  | 0.720           | 0.729         | GC5   | 0.506           | removed       |
| PBC1 | 0.583           | removed       | GC6   | 0.671           | 0.654         |
| PBC2 | 0.639           | 0.651         | GC7   | 0.635           | 0.666         |
| PBC3 | 0.710           | 0.745         | GC8   | 0.702           | 0.726         |
| PBC4 | 0.759           | 0.768         | GC9   | 0.733           | 0.773         |
| PBC5 | 0.720           | 0.741         | GC10  | 0.678           | 0.716         |
| CNS1 | 0.793           | 0.791         | GC11  | 0.668           | 0.718         |
| CNS2 | 0.813           | 0.809         | GC12  | 0.763           | 0.795         |
| CNS3 | 0.755           | 0.758         | GC13  | 0.669           | 0.733         |

Table 4 reports composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) for each latent variable. CR assesses internal consistency and is usually preferred over Cronbach's alpha in PLS-SEM, while AVE assesses convergent validity by showing how much of the variance in the indicators is captured by the latent construct rather than by error. All CR values exceed the conventional 0.70 threshold, indicating that the indicators of each construct measure it consistently, and all AVE values are at or above 0.50, meaning that each construct explains at least half of the variance of its indicators, which supports convergent validity.

**Table 4**  
Composite reliability and average variance extracted

| Research variable                  | CR (composite reliability) | AVE   |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| Social influence (SI)              | 0.850                      | 0.587 |
| Perceived behavioral control (PBC) | 0.818                      | 0.529 |
| Environmental concern (EC)         | 0.866                      | 0.568 |
| Consumer novelty seeking (CNS)     | 0.924                      | 0.635 |
| Green consumption behavior (GC)    | 0.898                      | 0.524 |

Table 5 reports rho\_A and Cronbach's alpha, which provide additional evidence of internal consistency. All rho\_A values and all Cronbach's alpha values exceed 0.70, indicating acceptable to very good reliability for every construct. Respondents therefore answered the items within each construct coherently, so the scale scores for the five constructs can be treated as stable summaries of the underlying concepts.

Table 6 applies the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The diagonal values are the square roots of AVE and the off-diagonal values are correlations among constructs. Discriminant validity is supported when each diagonal value is larger than every correlation in its row and column, which means that a construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs. In these data every square root of AVE exceeds the corresponding inter-construct correlations, showing that the five constructs are empirically distinct: although green consumption behavior correlates moderately with

consumer novelty seeking and environmental concern, it is not so highly correlated that it collapses into them, which justifies modeling them as separate predictors.

**Table 5**

Reliability of the research variables

| Variable                           | rho_A | Cronbach's alpha |
|------------------------------------|-------|------------------|
| Social influence (SI)              | 0.775 | 0.766            |
| Perceived behavioral control (PBC) | 0.727 | 0.714            |
| Environmental concern (EC)         | 0.874 | 0.809            |
| Consumer novelty seeking (CNS)     | 0.911 | 0.904            |
| Green consumption behavior (GC)    | 0.877 | 0.870            |

**Table 6**

Discriminant validity assessment (Fornell-Larcker criterion)

|                                    | CNS          | GC           | PBC          | EC           | SI           |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Consumer novelty seeking (CNS)     | <b>0.797</b> |              |              |              |              |
| Green consumption behavior (GC)    | 0.433        | <b>0.724</b> |              |              |              |
| Perceived behavioral control (PBC) | 0.260        | 0.414        | <b>0.728</b> |              |              |
| Environmental concern (EC)         | 0.205        | 0.406        | 0.441        | <b>0.754</b> |              |
| Social influence (SI)              | 0.350        | 0.417        | 0.246        | 0.167        | <b>0.766</b> |

Note: Diagonal values in bold are the square roots of AVE; off-diagonal values are inter-construct correlations.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted with partial least squares structural equation modeling using SmartPLS. PLS-SEM is appropriate here because the study is predictive and exploratory in orientation, extends an established theory with additional constructs and does not assume multivariate normality [52]. The analysis proceeded in two stages: assessment of the measurement model to establish reliability and validity, reported in Section 3.4, followed by evaluation of the structural model to test the hypothesized relationships. Path significance was obtained by bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples. Based on TPB and the green consumption literature, the conceptual framework treats green consumption behavior as the dependent variable and social influence, perceived behavioral control, environmental concern and consumer novelty seeking as independent variables.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Descriptive Assessment of the Constructs

To establish whether respondents' attitudes and behaviors lie above or below the neutral point of the five-point scale, each construct was compared with the scale midpoint of 3 using a one-sample t-test. The results are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7**

One-sample t-test results against the scale midpoint of 3

| Variable                           | t-statistic | p-value | Mean difference |
|------------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------------|
| Social influence (SI)              | 10.271      | < 0.001 | 0.394           |
| Perceived behavioral control (PBC) | 33.074      | < 0.001 | 0.958           |
| Environmental concern (EC)         | 51.395      | < 0.001 | 1.318           |
| Consumer novelty seeking (CNS)     | 9.541       | < 0.001 | 0.386           |
| Green consumption behavior (GC)    | 23.622      | < 0.001 | 0.827           |

The mean of every construct is significantly higher than the scale midpoint ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating positive environmental attitudes and behavior among respondents. Environmental concern shows

the largest mean difference (1.318), which suggests particularly strong awareness of environmental issues among Iranian consumers. This heightened awareness stands in stark contrast to Iran's low ranking on green-related indices. According to the 2024 Environmental Performance Index [4], Iran scores only 17.0 out of 100 on waste recovery, with roughly 7 percent of municipal waste separated at source and only 13 percent recycled nationwide, far below the 30 to 70 percent rates achieved in advanced economies [5, 6].

This attitude-performance gap can be attributed in large part to economic constraints and affordability barriers. The average monthly wage in Iran is approximately 200 US dollars, which translates to roughly 2,400 US dollars annually [9]. At this income level even modest investments in sustainable technologies, such as energy-efficient appliances, water-saving fixtures or organic food, represent a significant share of the household budget. Where green alternatives carry a price premium over conventional products, Iranian consumers face difficult trade-offs between environmental values and essential living expenses including housing, healthcare, transport and food. This economic reality helps explain why the strong environmental concern observed in the sample does not translate into proportionally strong national environmental performance.

#### 4.2 Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

After confirming the quality of the measurement model, the structural model was evaluated in SmartPLS using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples to determine the significance of the paths between constructs. Path coefficients, t-values and p-values are reported in Table 8, which shows that all four hypotheses are supported by statistically significant relationships. H1, which proposed that social influence positively affects green consumption behavior, yields a path coefficient of 0.244 ( $t = 5.230$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating a moderate positive effect. H2, concerning perceived behavioral control, yields a path coefficient of 0.186 ( $t = 3.919$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), which suggests that a consumer's sense of empowerment shapes green purchasing decisions. H3 confirms that environmental concern significantly affects green consumption behavior with a path coefficient of 0.232 ( $t = 5.389$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). H4, testing the effect of consumer novelty seeking, exhibits the strongest relationship among the four constructs with a path coefficient of 0.251 ( $t = 5.361$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), which highlights the role of novelty-seeking tendencies in driving sustainable consumption. The three leading coefficients lie within a narrow band of 0.232 to 0.251 and should not be over-interpreted as a strict ranking, although the ordering is reproduced by the independent regression estimates reported in Section 4.3.

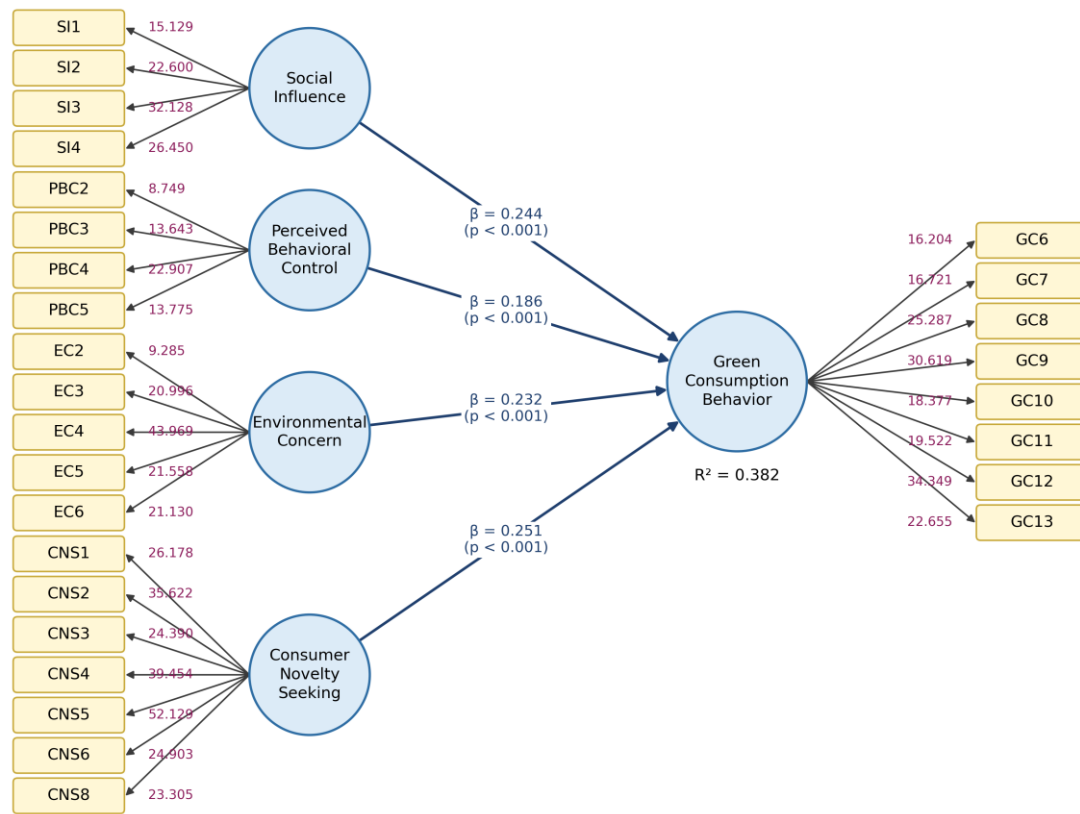
**Table 8**

Structural model assessment results

| Predictor                          | Hypothesis | Path coefficient ( $\beta$ ) | t-statistic | p-value | Result    |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------------------------|-------------|---------|-----------|
| Social influence (SI)              | H1         | 0.244                        | 5.230       | < 0.001 | Supported |
| Perceived behavioral control (PBC) | H2         | 0.186                        | 3.919       | < 0.001 | Supported |
| Environmental concern (EC)         | H3         | 0.232                        | 5.389       | < 0.001 | Supported |
| Consumer novelty seeking (CNS)     | H4         | 0.251                        | 5.361       | < 0.001 | Supported |

Figure 1 presents the estimated model, showing bootstrap t-statistics on the outer model and path coefficients with p-values on the inner model. Perceived behavioral control and environmental concern both have positive and significant effects on green consumption behavior, which confirms the role of perceived individual capability and environmental sensitivity in explaining green behavior. Consumer novelty seeking carries the strongest path, and social influence is also significant, so green behavior in Iran is shaped both by social pressure or support and by individual dispositions. To evaluate explanatory power,  $R^2$  was computed: the four predictors jointly explain 38.2 percent of the

variance in green consumption behavior ( $R^2 = 0.382$ ). The standardized root mean square residual was 0.081, marginally above the conservative 0.08 benchmark but within the 0.10 cut-off commonly applied to PLS-SEM models, and the normed fit index was 0.722, above the 0.70 reference level. Taken together these indices indicate an acceptable, if not excellent, correspondence between the proposed model and the data.



Note: Values beside indicators are bootstrap t-statistics of the outer loadings (5,000 resamples); values on the structural paths are standardised path coefficients with p-values. Indicators removed during measurement-model purification are not shown.

**Fig. 1.** Structural model results for the Iranian sample

The affordability constraint must be understood within Iran's broader macroeconomic crisis. According to the World Bank [10], inflation reached 40.1 percent in the first five months of 2025/26, with food price inflation at 44.5 percent, and is projected to exceed 50 percent by 2026/27. The economy is experiencing stagflation, with GDP projected to contract by 2.3 percent on average during 2025/26 to 2026/27 as a result of intensified sanctions and declining oil revenues. Most critically, the share of the population living below the upper middle-income poverty line of 8.30 US dollars per day in 2021 purchasing power parity is forecast to rise from 33.2 percent in 2024/25 to 38.8 percent in 2026/27, pushing an additional 5 million Iranians into poverty within two years. Under these conditions, where more than a third of the population struggles to meet basic needs and real purchasing power is continuously eroded, green consumption becomes an unattainable luxury rather than a practical choice. This macroeconomic context illuminates why perceived behavioral control emerged as the weakest predictor in the model: Iranian consumers may genuinely embrace environmental values and feel social pressure to adopt sustainable practices, yet simultaneously recognize that such behaviors remain beyond their practical reach.

#### 4.3 Robustness Check Using Linear Regression

To verify that the results are not an artefact of the estimator, the same relationships were re-estimated by ordinary least squares regression of summated construct scores. The results are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9**  
Linear regression results for the Iranian sample

| Independent variable         | Unstandardized coefficient | p-value |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|---------|
| Environmental concern        | 0.296                      | < 0.001 |
| Social influence             | 0.220                      | < 0.001 |
| Perceived behavioral control | 0.202                      | < 0.001 |
| Consumer novelty seeking     | 0.224                      | < 0.001 |

All four coefficients are positive and significant, which confirms H1 to H4 under an alternative estimator: higher levels of environmental concern, social pressure, perceived behavioral control and novelty orientation each increase green consumption behavior. The coefficients in Table 9 are unstandardized, so each is expressed in the units of its own predictor and they are not directly comparable with one another. Environmental concern carries the largest value (0.296) for that reason, rather than because it exerts the strongest influence. When the variables are standardized so that the coefficients become directly comparable, the ordering is consumer novelty seeking (0.260), social influence (0.242), environmental concern (0.217) and perceived behavioral control (0.167). That is the same ordering produced by the latent variable model in Table 8, and perceived behavioral control is the weakest predictor under both estimators. The regression therefore corroborates rather than qualifies the structural model: the prominence of novelty seeking and the weakness of perceived behavioral control are robust to dropping the latent variable machinery and estimating the model on simple unweighted scale scores.

## 5. Discussion

This study investigated green consumption behavior in Iran by examining how social influence, perceived behavioral control, environmental concern and consumer novelty seeking predict sustainable purchasing decisions. The findings offer insight into the psychological drivers of green consumption in a Muslim-majority society and reveal patterns that both confirm and extend existing TPB research in Islamic marketing contexts. Critically, the results illuminate a fundamental paradox: Iranian consumers demonstrate strong psychological readiness for green consumption, yet that readiness confronts severe structural and economic barriers that constrain behavioral translation at national level.

### 5.1 Consumer Novelty Seeking as a Leading Driver of Green Consumption Decisions

The most striking finding is that consumer novelty seeking carries the strongest path to green consumption behavior in the structural model ( $\beta = 0.251$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), matching or surpassing the traditional TPB constructs and environmental concern. To the best of our knowledge this is among the first empirical demonstrations that novelty-seeking motives rival moral and normative motives in a Muslim-majority society, which challenges the prevailing assumption in the Islamic marketing literature that Muslim consumers are driven primarily by moral-religious obligation and social-normative pressure when making sustainable consumption decisions. The ordering is reproduced when the model is re-estimated by standardized regression on unweighted scale scores (Section 4.3), so it does not depend on the latent variable estimator; the leading predictors are nonetheless closely spaced, so the substantive claim is that novelty seeking belongs in the front rank of drivers rather than that it dominates the others by a wide margin.

This finding suggests that Iranian consumers increasingly view green products not merely as moral imperatives aligned with Islamic teaching on stewardship but as modern innovations that signal a progressive, environmentally conscious identity. The strength of the relationship indicates that for many Iranian consumers green consumption represents an opportunity to participate in global sustainability culture and to demonstrate adoption of contemporary consumer practices.

The prominence of consumer novelty seeking does not diminish the role of Islamic values in shaping green consumption; rather it suggests a more nuanced relationship in which religious principles provide foundational support for environmental responsibility while novelty-seeking motives act as a leading behavioral driver. Iranian Muslim consumers may view green products as fulfilling both a religious obligation, in avoiding *israf*, and a personal aspiration toward modern and responsible consumption, a dual framing that makes green choices particularly appealing.

### 5.2 The Persistent Role of Social Influence in Theocratic Contexts

Social influence remains a significant predictor of green consumption in Iran ( $\beta = 0.244$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), confirming that normative pressure from family, friends and community continues to shape individual behavior in this collectivist, religiously oriented society. The finding supports the TPB prediction that subjective norms matter, particularly where social cohesion and religious community are central to daily life [31].

The significance of social influence in Iran reflects the formal embedding of Islamic principles in state structures and legal systems, where religious authorities and community networks actively shape social expectations around consumption [53]. In such contexts green consumption behavior is subject not only to personal evaluation but to collective judgment and religious accountability. Iranian consumers perceive green choices as visible actions that can enhance or diminish standing within their reference groups, which aligns with research showing that social norms are particularly powerful in collectivist cultures [25]. The simultaneous significance of social influence and consumer novelty seeking reveals that Iranian consumers navigate green consumption through a dual pathway, balancing communal religious expectations against personal novelty-oriented motives.

### 5.3 Environmental Concern and Perceived Behavioral Control

Environmental concern ( $\beta = 0.232$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and perceived behavioral control ( $\beta = 0.186$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) both significantly predict green consumption, confirming their importance in the Iranian context. These findings align with emerging market research: Kumar [30] similarly found environmental concern to be a significant predictor of green purchase behavior in India, while Arli *et al.*, [39] demonstrated that perceived readiness is critical for translating green attitudes into purchase intentions in developing economies. The comparatively weaker effect of perceived behavioral control echoes the findings of Konalingam *et al.*, [29] in Sri Lanka, where structural constraints in emerging markets limit the translation of environmental values into actual behavior, and is consistent with Mabaso and Osakwe [54], who likewise found using PLS-SEM that attitudes and perceived behavioral control rather than subjective norms were the stronger predictors in an emerging market TPB study. The relative weakness of perceived behavioral control, the lowest path coefficient among all predictors, deserves particular attention given the economic context documented above.

The strong effect of environmental concern reflects the severity of Iran's environmental challenges: severe air pollution in major cities, critical water scarcity and advancing desertification have heightened public awareness and worry about environmental degradation [3, 40]. The t-test results show that environmental concern exhibits the largest mean difference from the scale midpoint (1.318), indicating genuinely strong environmental awareness among Iranian consumers.

Islamic teachings that prohibit corruption and wastefulness provide a religious framing that amplifies environmental concern by linking ecological degradation to spiritual accountability.

Yet this heightened awareness stands in stark contrast to Iran's environmental performance. As documented in Section 4.1, Iran scores only 17.0 out of 100 on the Environmental Performance Index waste recovery indicator, with approximately 7 percent of municipal waste separated at source and only 13 percent recycled nationwide, far below the 30 to 70 percent rates achieved in advanced economies. This attitude-performance gap is a central paradox that the present findings help to explain.

The relatively weak effect of perceived behavioral control ( $\beta = 0.186$ ) illuminates that paradox. With average monthly wages of approximately 200 US dollars [9], Iranian consumers face severe affordability constraints that limit their capacity to translate environmental values into purchasing behavior. Where green alternatives carry a price premium, consumers must make difficult trade-offs against essential living expenses. Under these conditions green consumption becomes an unattainable aspiration rather than a practical choice for a substantial part of the population. The attitude-performance gap is thus not a failure of consumer psychology but a rational response to severe structural economic constraints. Consumers who do perceive themselves as capable of making green purchases, whether through financial means, product knowledge or access to specialized retailers, are more likely to do so, but that group represents a constrained segment of the population.

#### *5.4 Theoretical Contributions*

This study advances scholarship on green consumption decisions in Islamic markets in four ways. First, it demonstrates that consumer novelty seeking is a critical but under-researched driver of green consumption in Muslim-majority societies, which challenges models that focus exclusively on moral-religious motivation. The finding that novelty seeking carries the strongest path in Iran suggests that even in highly religious contexts Muslim consumers are attracted to green products as modern innovations and not solely as religious obligations. This has implications for theorizing Muslim consumer behavior: Islamic marketing frameworks have emphasized the distinctiveness of Muslim consumers on the basis of religious values and Shariah compliance [55], sometimes implicitly positioning them as primarily tradition-oriented. The present findings suggest a more complex picture in which Muslim consumers simultaneously honour religious tradition and embrace modern, novelty-oriented consumption.

Second, the study shows that Iranian consumers balance traditional social-religious influences against modern novelty-oriented self-expression, operating through a dual pathway model. This extends TPB in Islamic contexts by showing that socially anchored and individually oriented pathways operate simultaneously and with nearly equal strength. Previous research has tended to examine these dimensions separately, focusing either on social norms and religious obligation, which emphasizes collectivism and tradition, or on individual attitudes and capabilities, which emphasizes agency and modernity. The integrated model demonstrates that the two pathways coexist and reinforce each other in shaping green consumption in Muslim-majority societies undergoing rapid change.

Third, the study provides a systematic documentation of the attitude-performance gap in green consumption within an Islamic market context, demonstrating that strong pro-environmental attitudes can coexist with weak national environmental outcomes when structural economic barriers constrain behavioral translation. This extends Elhoushy's [56] systematic review of sustainable consumer behavior maintenance, which identified economic constraints as a key barrier to behavior continuation, and aligns with Issock *et al.*, [57], who found that contextual factors significantly

moderate the relationship between environmental attitudes and pro-environmental behavior in developing nations. The contribution bridges Islamic marketing research with the broader literature on the intention-behavior gap by showing that economic affordability, and not merely cultural or religious factors, plays a decisive role in determining whether positive environmental attitudes translate into actual green consumption behavior.

Fourth, the study contributes contemporary evidence from Iran's evolving context in 2025, providing insight into how green consumption has developed in the post-pandemic era amid intensifying environmental challenges and economic pressure, and capturing how recent contextual conditions have shaped consumer psychology.

### *5.5 Managerial and Policy Implications*

The findings suggest concrete strategic directions for green marketers and policymakers operating in Iran's Islamic market context, while acknowledging the substantial economic constraints that shape consumer behavior.

For marketing practitioners, the prominence of consumer novelty seeking suggests that green products should be positioned as cutting-edge innovations rather than solely as moral imperatives. Marketing communications should emphasize modernity, advanced technology and global standards in order to resonate with novelty-seeking motives, framing green consumption as a marker of a progressive, informed consumer identity. Campaigns built on messages such as an invitation to join the future of responsible consumption will likely outperform those relying exclusively on religious obligation appeals. However, the simultaneous significance of social influence indicates that the most effective approach integrates both pathways, combining references to Islamic environmental principles of avoiding wastefulness and preventing corruption with messaging about the adoption of contemporary sustainable alternatives. This dual framing demonstrates that green consumption fulfills both religious duty and personal aspiration toward modern living.

Given the affordability constraints documented in this study, marketers must also address economic barriers directly. Appropriate strategies include transparent eco-labeling that helps consumers identify value-for-money green alternatives, tiered product offerings at multiple price points, instalment payment mechanisms, and an emphasis on long-term cost savings such as the reduction of utility bills through energy efficiency. The demographic profile of the sample, combined with the strong novelty-seeking effect, points to younger, educated urban Iranians as prime early adopters who can catalyze broader diffusion through social networks and community influence. Marketers should nevertheless recognize that this segment, while psychologically receptive, also faces economic constraints that limit purchasing power.

For policymakers, the findings underscore the need for interventions that address both psychological drivers and structural barriers. On the demand side, integrating Islamic values into environmental campaigns through collaboration with religious authorities can strengthen social norms around green consumption; framing environmental protection as a religious obligation through religious education curricula and community events leverages the significant social influence effect documented here.

On the supply side, policy interventions should reduce the cost barriers that constrain perceived behavioral control. These include reduced regulatory barriers for green products, tax incentives for green imports and domestic production, subsidies for household adoption of sustainable technologies, and investment in Iranian green industries to reduce reliance on expensive imports. Such measures improve accessibility, reduce cost and align with both national self-sufficiency goals and consumer novelty-seeking tendencies.

Critically, policymakers must address the infrastructure gap that underlies Iran's poor environmental performance. Developing green consumption infrastructure, including recycling systems, credible green certification standards and expanded retail networks, reduces barriers while increasing the social visibility of green behavior. Without such investment, even psychologically motivated consumers cannot translate their attitudes into meaningful environmental outcomes. Read together, these results describe a decision environment in which motivational levers and structural levers are complements rather than substitutes: campaigns that raise motivation without relieving affordability constraints act on the strongest predictors while leaving the binding constraint untouched.

#### *5.6 Contextual Considerations: Iran in 2025*

The strength of consumer novelty seeking in the 2025 data reflects the post-pandemic shift in consumer consciousness. The COVID-19 pandemic heightened health and environmental awareness globally and potentially increased openness to green alternatives. However, Iran's 2025 context is also characterized by severe economic stress that fundamentally shapes the green consumption landscape. The World Bank [10] projects GDP contraction of 2.3 percent on average during 2025/26 to 2026/27 and inflation exceeding 50 percent by 2026/27, conditions that make discretionary spending on premium green products increasingly difficult for a significant part of the population. This suggests that the attitude-performance gap documented here may widen in the near term as macroeconomic conditions deteriorate, even as psychological readiness for green consumption remains strong.

#### *5.7 Limitations and Directions for Future Research*

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample relies on convenience sampling with online data collection; while the 405 respondents include diverse demographic characteristics, the relatively high proportion of younger respondents (47.7 percent under 30) may limit generalisability to the broader Iranian population. Second, given Iran's rapidly changing economic conditions, with inflation, currency depreciation and poverty rates shifting substantially from year to year, longitudinal research would be particularly valuable for establishing causality and for examining how green consumption patterns evolve as economic circumstances change. Third, although the study adapted a validated instrument for a Muslim-majority society and Iran has an Islamic constitutional order, individual-level religiosity was not measured directly, which limits the ability to test how religious commitment moderates the relationships between TPB constructs and green behavior; future research should incorporate religiosity measures to examine whether highly religious consumers respond differently to social influence than to novelty-seeking appeals. Fourth, the study is cross-sectional and self-reported, so common method variance and the gap between reported and observed behavior cannot be excluded. Finally, the study focuses exclusively on Iran and the findings may not generalize to other Muslim-majority countries with different political systems, economic conditions and environmental challenges; countries such as Malaysia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia offer contrasting contexts that would enable comparative analysis of how structural factors shape the translation of pro-environmental attitudes into behavior. Future research should also explore how sanctions-era economic conditions specifically shape green consumption, and whether domestic green product innovation can supply affordable alternatives that allow Iranian consumers to act on their environmental values.

## **6. Conclusions**

This study modeled the drivers of green consumption decisions among 405 Iranian consumers by extending the Theory of Planned Behavior with environmental concern and consumer novelty

seeking, and estimating the resulting model with PLS-SEM. All four predictors significantly and positively influence green consumption behavior, and together they explain 38.2 percent of its variance. Consumer novelty seeking carries the strongest path ( $\beta = 0.251$ ), followed closely by social influence ( $\beta = 0.244$ ), environmental concern ( $\beta = 0.232$ ) and perceived behavioral control ( $\beta = 0.186$ ); this ordering, and in particular the position of perceived behavioral control as the weakest predictor, is reproduced when the model is re-estimated by standardized regression on unweighted scale scores.

Two conclusions follow. First, green consumption in a theocratic Muslim-majority market runs through a dual pathway. Communal expectations rooted in Islamic principles such as the prohibition of *israf* continue to shape choices, but consumers are drawn to green products just as strongly because those products are modern innovations that signal a progressive identity. Islamic marketing models that treat Muslim consumers as primarily tradition-oriented therefore capture only half of the decision. Second, psychological readiness is not the binding constraint in Iran. Respondents scored significantly above the scale midpoint on every construct, yet national environmental performance remains among the weakest in the world. The gap is explained by the structural and financial conditions that depress perceived behavioral control, and it will not close through persuasion alone. Effective decision support for sustainable consumption in comparable emerging markets must therefore pair innovation-oriented and normative messaging with measures that make green alternatives genuinely affordable and accessible.

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### **Conflicts of Interest**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest. The authors have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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