

Why Customers Pay More for Green: The Combined Effects of Personal Norms and Attitude

Dr. Pranjali Pachpore

Independent Researcher, Chandigarh, Punjab, India

Krunal Mehta

Assistant Professor, Shanti Business School, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India

Corresponding Author: mkrunal93@gmail.com

Abstract

Although premium pricing is becoming more and more important in the marketing of green products, customers frequently support sustainability in general but hesitate when it comes to paying more. Using two proximal mechanisms, an internalised obligation route via personal norms and an evaluative route via attitude toward paying a premium for green products, this study explores the psychological pathways through which consumers' hedonic values influence their intention to pay more for green products. Using survey data and variance-based structural equation modelling, the results demonstrate that positive attitudes, in addition to the motivating influence of personal norms, account for the majority of customers' premium intention for green items. Although there is no direct value-to-intention connection, hedonic values reinforce attitude and personal norms but do not directly convert into premium intention. These findings imply that experiential orientations are important in green markets primarily when they are translated into (i) a resoundingly positive assessment of paying more for sustainability and (ii) a sense of self-consistent duty to support ecologically conscious products. In addition to providing practical advice for green brand positioning namely, combining experiential meaning with credible justification and identity-consistent norm cues that legitimise the price premium, the study advances the field of green pricing research by elucidating how value orientations are converted into premium acceptance.

Keywords: green products; green premium; willingness to pay; hedonic values; attitude; personal norms; sustainability marketing

Introduction

As companies look for distinctiveness, legitimacy, and resilience in markets that are becoming more conscious of environmental effect, green products have transitioned from niche offers to mainstream competitive strategies. However, commercialisation frequently depends on a challenging reality: consumers have shown that their support for sustainability may wane when higher prices become prominent, and many green choices come with a premium. Despite economic pressure, recent extensive consumer research indicates that consumers are still prepared to pay more for products that are sourced or manufactured sustainably (PwC, 2024). Consumers also exhibit concern about deceptive or excessive environmental marketing and report difficulties deciphering the increase of sustainability promises, which might reduce premium acceptance by raising perceived risk and scepticism (Deloitte, 2025). When taken as a whole, these trends make the green premium a major marketing challenge: not just how to price green products, but also how to convince customers that paying more is justified.

In essence, customers assess what is gained in relation to what is sacrificed when deciding whether to accept a premium (Zeithaml, 1988). It is more difficult to convert the "gain" side into personal value at the time of purchase in green contexts, though, because the advantages are frequently indirect (such as lower emissions), temporally distant, or cooperatively distributed. This clarifies how the way the green premium is framed and presented can significantly influence customer decisions. According to recent studies, for instance, some price-premium display tactics can change consumers' choices for eco-friendly products by influencing how they perceive and feel about paying more (Chen, 2024). These results suggest that psychological processes that link sustainability meaning to a legitimate desire to pay more are what determine premium acceptance.

We contend that hedonic value orientation, the propensity to look for pleasure, affect, and experience gratification through consumption—is a significant upstream driver in this process (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). When green products are marketed as emotionally fulfilling, aesthetically pleasing, or identity-expressive options rather than just morally or practically sound ones, hedonic values may theoretically increase the adoption of green premiums. However, value orientations are rarely directly and unmediatedly translated into expensive behavioural intentions. According to research on intention formation, the most direct indicators of intents are usually proximal factors, especially attitudes (Ajzen, 1991). Hedonic values may therefore function through an evaluative pathway, influencing more positive sentiments on the payment of a premium for environmentally friendly goods, thereby bolstering premium intention.

A second way that green premium decisions can function is through internalised self-expectations. Personal norms have long been conceptualised in pro-environmental behaviour research as moral obligations that drive behaviour, particularly when actions are presented as burdened with responsibility and when private costs are prominent (Schwartz, 1977; Steg & de Groot, 2010). The fact that personal norms might influence environmentally friendly behaviour by triggering self-sanctioning mechanisms (such as predicted pride or remorse) is further highlighted by reviews and meta-developments of the Norm Activation Model (Harland et al., 2007; Onwezen et al., 2013). Personal norms may offer the extra push required to ease the conflict between "I want" and "I should" in green buying contexts, especially ones that require paying more. This would complement attitudes as a driver of premium intention. In light of this, the current study creates and evaluates a parsimonious model that uses two proximal mechanisms—personal norms (internalised obligation pathway) and attitude (evaluative pathway)—to link hedonic values to the desire to pay more for green items. In accordance with recent recommendations for variance-based structural modelling in predictive, theory-building situations, we empirically estimate the model using PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2022). Our findings, which were based on survey data from 302 consumers, show that attitudes account for the majority of premium intention, with personal norms contributing as well. Hedonic values, on the other hand, predominantly influence premium intention through these proximal processes rather than directly. There are two ways in which this work advances pricing research and green marketing. First, it makes clear why hedonic value arguments could not succeed in gaining acceptability for the green premium unless they are converted into positive assessments and self-justifications that are consistent with norms. Second, it provides managers with practical advice for dealing with doubt and ambiguity in claims: defending green premiums might necessitate combining credibility and cues that reinforce internalised commitment with experiential meaning.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Green premium intention as a consequential choice under cost and credibility constraints.

Because environmentally friendly solutions frequently involve higher production, certification, and compliance expenses that are passed on to purchasers, consumers' willingness to pay more for green items is becoming more and more significant. However, making "green premium" decisions is psychologically taxing since, although environmental benefits may be delivered collectively, probabilistically, or in a delayed manner, the price increase is immediate and personal. Because of this asymmetry, customers' perceptions of the value of paying more and their trust in the veracity of the product's environmental promises are particularly important in determining whether or not they accept premiums. This perspective is supported by recent research that demonstrates how the presentation of a green pricing premium can change

consumer preferences, highlighting the fact that premium acceptance is dependent on interpretation and explanation processes rather than simple consistent pro-environmental inclinations (Chen, 2024).

In light of this, proximal psychological factors that convert more distal orientations (like values) into premium judgements should account for the formation of intentions.

Attitude as a proximal evaluative driver of green premium intention.

A central proposition in intention-based models is that intentions are most directly shaped by attitudes summary evaluations of the target behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Meta-analytic evidence in the green consumption domain reinforces attitude’s role as a consistent predictor of green purchase intentions (Zaremohzzabieh et al., 2021). When consumers view paying extra for a green product as worthwhile—whether because they anticipate higher personal benefits (e.g., health, quality, warm-glow), perceive superior value, or regard the premium as justified—they should be more likely to intend to pay the green premium.

H1: Attitude toward paying a premium for green products positively influences intention to pay a premium for green products.

Personal norms as an internalised obligation driver of green premium intention.

While attitude captures evaluative favorability, green purchasing often involves a moralized dimension—supporting environmental protection and reducing harm which elevates the role of internal obligation. Norm-based theorizing conceptualizes **personal norms** as feelings of moral obligation that motivate behavior through self-sanctioning mechanisms (e.g., anticipated pride, guilt) (Schwartz, 1977; Onwezen et al., 2013). In premium contexts, such internalized obligations may be especially important because the consumer must justify a tangible sacrifice (paying more) for outcomes that may be less directly experienced. Empirical work in adjacent contexts similarly points to personal norms as relevant predictors of willingness to pay for green products (García-Salirrosas et al., 2024).

H2: Personal norms toward supporting green products positively influence intention to pay a premium for green products.

Hedonic values as an upstream driver of attitudes toward paying a green premium

Values provide stable guiding principles that shape what consequences consumers attend to and how they evaluate trade-offs. Hedonic values, in particular, reflect a preference for pleasure, enjoyment, comfort, and affective gratification in consumption (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). In the environmental domain, research demonstrates that hedonic values are meaningfully linked to environmentally relevant attitudes and choices, often because many pro-environmental actions are perceived to reduce comfort or enjoyment (Steg, Perlaviciute, van der Werff, & Lurvink, 2014).

This logic has an important implication for green premium contexts. If paying a green premium is interpreted as diminishing hedonic benefits (less comfort, less convenience, lower immediate enjoyment), hedonic values may suppress favorable evaluations of the premium. Conversely, if firms position green products as delivering *experiential* gains (e.g., sensory/aesthetic appeal, “feel-good” consumption, identity expression), hedonic values may contribute to more favorable evaluations of paying extra. Thus, hedonic values should systematically shape attitudes toward paying a green premium.

H3: Hedonic values positively influence attitude toward paying a premium for green products.

Hedonic values and personal norms in green premium decisions.

Personal norms are not formed in a vacuum; they are shaped by deeper value priorities and by what people perceive as self-consistent and important. Norm-activation logic proposes that personal norms arise when individuals internalize responsibility-laden standards and anticipate self-evaluative consequences of compliance or noncompliance (Schwartz, 1977; Onwezen et al., 2013). Although hedonic values are often discussed as potential barriers to pro-environmental action when green behavior is experienced as less pleasant (Steg et al., 2014), contemporary green markets increasingly allow sustainability to be constructed as identity-relevant and emotionally rewarding. In such cases, hedonic-oriented consumers may develop stronger internalized standards to support “better” choices that align with a desirable self-image (e.g., being a mindful, modern consumer who selects superior options), thereby strengthening personal norms supportive of paying a green premium.

H4: Hedonic values positively influence personal norms toward supporting green products.

Hedonic values and intention to pay a green premium.

A final question is whether hedonic values exert a direct influence on premium intentions. Theoretically, premium payment can function as a self-reward and as a means of securing richer experiences. Yet intention frameworks suggest that the effect of distal orientations (values) on intention is typically realized through proximal mediators such as attitudes and norms (Ajzen, 1991; Onwezen et al., 2013). Accordingly, while a direct association is plausible, it should be weaker than the indirect pathways. We therefore include a direct path to test whether hedonic values retain explanatory power beyond the evaluative and normative routes.

H5: Hedonic values positively influence intention to pay a premium for green products.

Methodology

We employed a cross-sectional survey design to test the proposed model explaining consumers’ intention to pay a premium for green products as a function of hedonic values, attitude, and personal norms. The final sample comprised 302 usable responses. Details mentioned in Table 1.

Table 1: Profiles of Respondents

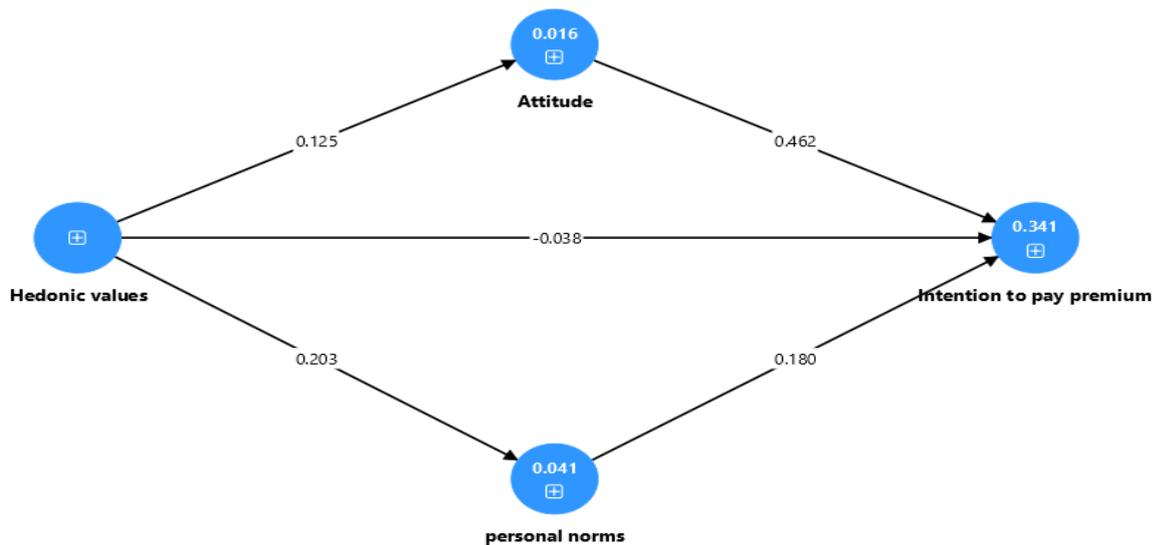
Demographics and Sub Demographics		Total No. of Response	%
No of total responses		302	100
Gender	Male	142	47.01
	Female	160	52.99
Age (in years.)	18-24	178	58.94
	25-34	64	21.19
	35-44	44	14.57
	45 and above	16	5.30
Educational qualification	Above Post Graduation	32	10.60
	Post graduation	72	23.84
	Graduation	172	56.95
	12 th	18	5.96
Marital Status	Below 12 th	8	2.65
	Married	96	31.79
Family	Unmarried	206	68.21
	Joint	134	44.37
Residential area	Nuclear	168	55.63
	Urban	200	66.22

	Semi-urban	42	13.91
	Rural	60	19.87
Occupation	Business	20	6.62
	Service	88	29.14
	Student	182	60.26
	Other	12	3.98
Income	Below 25,000 INR	34	11.26
	25,000 – 50,000 INR	112	37.09
	50,000 – 75,000 INR	78	25.83
	75,000 – 1,00,000 INR	56	18.54
	Above 1,00,000 INR	22	7.28

Source: Primary Data

The model was estimated using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS. PLS-SEM is appropriate for theory testing with latent variables when the objective is prediction-oriented explanation and when the model includes multiple constructs measured by multi-item indicators (Hair et al., 2022). All constructs were specified as reflective, consistent with their conceptualization as underlying dispositions and evaluations that manifest in observed indicators. Following established PLS-SEM procedures, we assessed (1) the measurement model for reliability and validity and (2) the structural model for hypothesis testing using standardized path coefficients and bootstrapped inference (Hair et al., 2022). In evaluating the measurement model, internal consistency reliability was examined using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (including ρ_A and ρ_C), convergent validity using average variance extracted (AVE) as shown in Table 2, and discriminant validity using both the Fornell–Larcker criterion as shown in Table 3 and the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT) as shown in Table 4 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Henseler et al., 2015). As indicated in Tables 5 and 6, bootstrapped t-values and p-values were used to assess structural correlations in accordance with the best practices for inference in PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2022).

Figure 1: Conceptual Model



Findings and Hypothesis Tests

The findings of the structural model offer a logical explanation of how customers come to pay a premium for green products. The pattern across hypotheses suggests that proximal psychological mechanisms, particularly attitude and personal norms, are the primary drivers of premium intention, while hedonic values function upstream by influencing these proximal drivers rather than directly influencing premium intention.

H1 anticipated that intention to pay a premium is favourably influenced by attitude toward paying more for green products. This idea is substantially supported by the results. In addition to being the strongest association in the model, the path from attitude to premium intention is positive and statistically significant. Fundamentally, this suggests that whether or not customers believe that paying more is beneficial is the primary determinant of their willingness to accept a green premium. Put another way, consumers are more likely to accept the green premium when they form a positive overall judgement that the additional price is justified, whether because of perceived benefits, perceived value, or the perceived legitimacy of the premium itself. This is because the green premium is less likely to be accepted simply because the option is "green." This result is consistent with the larger intention-formation logic, which holds that attitudes directly precede behavioural intentions, especially when there is a definite personal trade-off involved (Ajzen, 1991).

According to H2, the propensity to pay more for environmentally friendly products is favourably influenced by personal norms. Additionally, this theory is validated. Personal norms and premium intention have a favourable and statistically significant relationship. The fact that this effect endures in tandem with attitude is significant because it implies that consumers' acceptance of green premiums is not solely based on evaluations but also partially influenced by self-regulation decisions influenced by internal norms and what they believe they "ought" to do. Paying more can be interpreted as a responsibility-bearing act (e.g., supporting ecologically friendly offerings despite a personal expense), which makes such internalised obligations significant in the green sector. This lends credence to the view that consumers' premium intention for green items is strengthened when they internalise the choice as self-affirming and norm-consistent rather than just being aesthetically pleasing (Schwartz, 1977; Onwezen et al., 2013).

According to H3, attitudes on paying a green premium are positively influenced by hedonic values. This hypothesis is supported by the data, which show a positive and statistically significant relationship between attitude and hedonic values. From a conceptual standpoint, this research indicates that consumers who prioritise enjoyment, experiential gratification, and affective outcomes are more likely to have positive

opinions about spending more—as long as the green premium is perceived as facilitating a "better" experience rather than just as an additional expense. Theoretically, this has implications for green marketing since green consumption is frequently presented as sacrifice-oriented (e.g., "do good," "reduce harm"), which may cause hedonic-oriented consumers to object if the premium is linked to less comfort or convenience. The positive relationship seen here suggests that hedonic-oriented consumers seem to be developing more positive assessments of paying more in your context. This is in line with the notion that, when properly communicated, green products may be viewed as emotionally fulfilling ("feel-good consumption") or identity-expressive (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Steg et al., 2014).

H4 projected that personal norms supporting green items are positively influenced by hedonic values. This theory is also validated. Personal norms are favourably and significantly predicted by hedonic values. This finding is especially intriguing as moral obligations, not pleasure-driven incentives, are frequently used to define personal norms. Research suggests that hedonic orientation might complement internalised norms that encourage green consumption, even enhancing them. According to one understanding, green consumption may have two purposes: it can be mutually beneficial and normatively acceptable. That is, hedonic consumers may internalize expectations to choose "better" options not only because they are environmentally responsible but also because these choices support a desirable self-image (e.g., being mindful, modern, and quality-oriented), which can feel emotionally gratifying. This aligns with research showing that self-conscious emotions (anticipated pride and guilt) can connect internal standards to pro-environmental choices, even when costs are involved (Onwezen et al., 2013).

H5 predicted that hedonic values positively influence intention to pay a premium for green products. This hypothesis is not supported. The direct path from hedonic values to premium intention is not statistically significant.

Theoretically, this non-finding is informative rather than problematic: it implies that **hedonic values do not function as a "direct trigger"** for paying more. Instead, hedonic values appear to matter only insofar as they are translated into (a) a favorable evaluation of paying extra (attitude) and (b) a stronger internalized standard supportive of green consumption (personal norms). In practical terms, this suggests that even consumers with strong hedonic orientations will not automatically accept a green premium unless the offer and communication convert hedonic orientation into clear *justification* (attitude) and *norm-consistency* (personal norms). This pattern is consistent with intention models in which distal orientations such as values typically exert influence through more proximal determinants, rather than producing costly intentions in a direct, unmediated manner (Ajzen, 1991; Steg & de Groot, 2010).

Overall interpretation and mechanism implied by the full set of results. The results of the hypothesis tests together point to a multi-layered mechanism. The psychological inclination to see paying a green premium more favourably and to internalise stronger norms supporting green choices is first shaped by hedonic values. Second, the intention to pay a premium is a direct result of these proximal factors, particularly attitude and personal norms. The idea that the green premium is accepted when it is validated by evaluation and internalised norms rather than being driven solely by hedonic orientation is supported by the lack of a direct hedonic values → premium intention effect. According to journal terminology, the results support a "distal-to-proximal" theory of green premium acceptance, which holds that while values are important upstream, consumers' internalised obligations and evaluations at the stage of intention creation serve as the key levers.

Table 2: Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho a)	Composite reliability (rho c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Attitude	0.898	0.900	0.936	0.830
Hedonic values	0.696	0.711	0.831	0.621
Intention to pay premium	0.889	0.891	0.931	0.818
personal norms	0.785	0.797	0.874	0.699

Table 3: Discriminant Validity using Fornell Larcher

	Attitude	Hedonic values	Intention to pay premium	personal norms
Attitude	0.911			
Hedonic values	0.125	0.788		
Intention to pay premium	0.566	0.056	0.905	
personal norms	0.604	0.203	0.451	0.836

Table 4: Discriminant Validity using HTMT

	Attitude	Hedonic values	Intention to pay premium	personal norms
Attitude				
Hedonic values	0.157			
Intention to pay premium	0.631	0.075		
personal norms	0.708	0.270	0.536	

Table 5: Path-coefficient Assessment

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Attitude -> Intention to pay premium	0.462	0.460	0.064	7.223	0.000
Hedonic values -> Attitude	0.125	0.133	0.060	2.071	0.038
Hedonic values -> Intention to pay premium	-0.038	-0.039	0.053	0.723	0.470
Hedonic values -> personal norms	0.203	0.213	0.058	3.512	0.000
personal norms -> Intention to pay premium	0.180	0.185	0.064	2.799	0.005

Table 6: Model Fit

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.066	0.178
d_ ULS	0.342	2.459
d_ G	0.195	0.288
Chi-square	375.788	454.733
NFI	0.802	0.761

Discussion

By examining the relationship between upstream value orientations and premium intentions, this study aimed to understand why customers are willing to pay more for green products. The results all point to the same mechanism: rather than hedonic value orientation acting as a direct trigger, consumers' willingness to accept a green premium is primarily driven by proximal psychological processes, what they think and feel about paying extra (attitude), and what they feel internally obligated to do (personal norms). By making it clear that the green premium is not just a result of "liking green" or "valuing pleasure," but also of whether or not customers can justify the higher price through norm-consistency and evaluative reasoning, the findings contribute to the field of green pricing research.

Attitude as the primary route to green premium acceptance

The main claim of intention-based models, that attitudes are direct antecedents of behavioural intentions, is supported by the fact that attitude is the strongest empirical driver of green premium intention (Ajzen, 1991). This conclusion is especially significant when it comes to green products because premium pricing highlights the sacrifice and encourages customers to consider if the additional expense is "worth it." Therefore, premium acceptance even in sustainability situations seems to be based on an evaluative calculus: when consumers form a favourable overall judgement about paying more for the green alternative, they intend to pay more. This supports the value-perception theory, which holds that customers react to price in light of perceived benefits and total value rather than price alone (Zeithaml, 1988). According to the attitude pathway, green premiums are most practically justified when customers believe the price difference is warranted—by means of substantiated benefit claims, a clear explanation of what the premium purchases, and a decreased perceived risk.

Personal norms as a complementary motivational pathway

Personal norms have a substantial and independent impact on green premium intention beyond evaluation. This bolsters the norm-activation argument that self-sanctioning mechanisms and internalised moral duty can drive ecologically important decisions (Schwartz, 1977; Onwezen et al., 2013; Steg & de Groot, 2010). Because the option has an obvious cost—paying more is not merely a market choice but also a test of one's commitment to one's standards—norms may become particularly significant in a premium situation. Accordingly, the results suggest that consumers' acceptance of green premiums is reinforced when they believe that paying more is in line with "the kind of person I am" or "what I should do," changing the premium from a simply economic trade-off to a norm-consistent act of self-regulation. This clarifies why ethical and identity-based frameworks can occasionally uphold environmentally friendly behaviour even in situations when consumers must forgo financial gain.

Hedonic values shape premium intention indirectly, not directly

While hedonic values do not directly predict intention to pay a green premium, they do strongly predict attitude and personal norms, which is a key theoretical contribution of this work. In theory, this combination is instructive. It implies that hedonic orientation influences consumers' interpretations of the green premium, including whether they view it favourably and whether they internalise more robust norms that encourage green consumption, but it does not, by itself, produce a desire to pay more. According to theory, this is in line with the distal-to-proximal logic, which holds that attitudes and internalised duties are the main immediate factors via which values impact intentions (Ajzen, 1991; Steg & de Groot, 2010). Fundamentally, it suggests that hedonic appeals (such as "feel good," "enjoy better," and "premium experience") won't boost the acceptance of green premiums on their own unless they are accompanied by stronger norm-consistency (personal norms) and/or stronger justification (attitude).

This also provides a helpful explanation for why "green-as-experience" positioning can be inconsistent in practice: even when hedonic consumers conceptually value sustainability, they may be reluctant to pay more if the premium is perceived as diminishing hedonic benefits (less comfort, convenience, or hassle). On the other hand, hedonic values can encourage the development of positive attitudes and more robust internalised norms when green products are positioned as providing experiential value and self-expressive significance, hence indirectly enhancing premium intention.

Implications, Limitations, and Future Research

Theoretical implications

By elucidating the psychological framework of green premium acceptance, this study advances the field of green pricing and marketing research. First, in line with popular intention-formation theories, the findings support the idea that attitude is the main proximal determinant of intention (Ajzen, 1991). The importance of financial sacrifice in green premium contexts makes evaluative judgement particularly crucial since customers are willing to pay more when they believe the premium is warranted and valuable, not just because they support sustainability in theory. Second, the results show that, in addition to attitude, personal norms offer additional explanatory power. Self-regulation through obligation and self-sanctioning is an internalised "ought" process that is especially significant when the decision entails a measurable personal cost, which makes this conceptually significant (Schwartz, 1977; Onwezen et al., 2013). Hedonic orientation is upstream but insufficient, as evidenced by the observed non-significant direct effect of hedonic values on green premium intention and the strong effects of hedonic values on attitude and personal norms. Instead of using direct value-to-intention effects, this pattern primarily advances the literature through proximal evaluative and normative channels. This approach helps to reconcile conflicting findings in value-based sustainability research, where "green intentions" frequently wane under price salience and credibility uncertainty (Zeithaml, 1988; Deloitte, 2024).

Managerial implications

The results provide managers looking to maintain or grow green premiums in increasingly doubtful markets with practical advice. First, managers should approach premium acceptance as a challenge to justification and make investments to develop evaluative ideas about "why the extra cost is worth it," as attitude is the primary driver of green premium intention. Risk-reducing signals (certifications, traceability cues, third-party substantiation), (b) credible benefit articulation (what the premium funds, what environmental outcomes are enabled), and (c) value framing that makes the exchange logical and valid are some ways to achieve this (Zeithaml, 1988). Second, the important role of personal norms suggests that communications that promote self-affirmation and norm-consistency, messaging that activates responsible self-identity and anticipated pride from supporting sustainable choices, can strengthen the adoption of green premiums without delving into moralising tones that might elicit resistance (Schwartz, 1977; Onwezen et al., 2013). Third, managers ought to exercise caution when depending solely on "feel-good" sustainability narratives. Hedonic values are significant in our research because they influence attitude and

personal norms, but they do not directly translate into premium intention. In practice, this means that hedonic positioning should be created to support the normative route (making the decision self-consistent and identity-congruent) and the evaluative route (making the premium seem joyful and value-adding rather than sacrificial), not the persuasion lever. Lastly, new research suggests that the way a green premium is presented can affect consumer preferences (e.g., by influencing perceived corporate effort and uneasiness regarding price differences). This suggests that careful price framing and disclosure strategy can increase premium acceptance (Chen, 2024). Given the ongoing consumer misunderstanding and mistrust of sustainability claims documented in significant consumer research, this is becoming more and more crucial (Deloitte, 2025; PwC, 2024).

Limitations

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study is based on a cross-sectional survey design, which limits causal inference; while the theoretical logic posits that values shape attitudes and norms, and these shape intentions, reverse or reciprocal relationships cannot be ruled out without longitudinal or experimental evidence. Second, the model is intentionally parsimonious, focusing on hedonic values, attitude, and personal norms; additional constructs commonly implicated in green premium acceptance—such as perceived greenwashing risk, trust in claims, perceived quality, price fairness, and perceived consumer effectiveness were not included and may account for further variance. Third, the empirical results are based on the SmartPLS output available, which supports hypothesis testing and measurement adequacy but does not allow a full predictive assessment discussion (e.g., out-of-sample prediction, effect size diagnostics) beyond what is reported.

Future research directions

Future research can extend this work in several high-impact directions. First, given the pattern of significant hedonic values → attitude/personal norms and significant attitude/personal norms → intention, but non-significant hedonic values → intention, scholars should test the implied **indirect effects** formally using bootstrapped mediation estimates and report the relative importance of the evaluative and normative pathways. This would arding when hedonic orientation matters for green premiums—through justification and/or obligation. Second, future work should examine boundary conditions that are especially relevant to premium settings, such as **price consciousness, income constraints, category involvement, and skepticism toward sustainability claims**. Industry evidence suggests that confusion and skepticism around green claims remain widespread, implying that trust-related variables may moderate the strength of the attitude and norm routes (Deloitte, 2024). Third, researchers can build a richer account of how firms can make green premiums more acceptable by manipulating **premium display strategies** and claim substantiation in experiments, leveraging emerging evidence that premium presentation can change consumer preference formation (Chen, 2024). Fourth, because willingness to pay more for sustainability varies across contexts and macroeconomic conditions, cross-cultural and cross-market replications would be valuable. Multi-country designs, or comparisons across developed and emerging markets, would improve generalisability and identify which psychological pathways remain stable (PwC, 2024). Lastly, future research can establish a connection between green premium intentions and downstream outcomes that are directly relevant to sustainable brand strategy, such as advocacy, resilience to competitive price promotions, and repeat purchase.

Acknowledgement: The authors sincerely acknowledge all respondents for their valuable time and participation, which made this study possible.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest associated with this research.

Ethical Consideration: The study was conducted in accordance with ethical research standards, with informed consent obtained from all participants and confidentiality of responses strictly maintained

References

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179–211.
- Chen, C. (2024). Promoting green choices: How price premium displays influence consumer preference for green products. *Industrial Marketing Management*.
- Deloitte. (2025). *Sustainable consumption trends: Sustainability has staying power*. Deloitte Insights.
- García-Salirrosas, E. E., et al. (2024). Influence of environmental awareness on the willingness to pay for green products: The role of personal norms and related drivers. *Frontiers in Psychology*.
- Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2022). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)* (3rd ed.). SAGE.
- Harland, P., Staats, H., & Wilke, H. A. M. (2007). Situational and personality factors as direct or personal norm mediated predictors of pro-environmental behavior: Questions derived from norm-activation theory. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 29(4), 323–334.
- Holbrook, M. B., & Hirschman, E. C. (1982). The experiential aspects of consumption: Consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(2), 132–140.
- Onwezen, M. C., Antonides, G., & Bartels, J. (2013). The norm activation model: An exploration of the functions of anticipated pride and guilt in pro-environmental behaviour. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 39, 141–153.
- PwC. (2024, May 15). *Consumers willing to pay 9.7% sustainability premium, even as cost-of-living and inflationary concerns weigh: PwC's 2024 Voice of the Consumer Survey*. PwC.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1977). Normative influences on altruism. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 10, pp. 221–279). Academic Press.
- Steg, L., & de Groot, J. I. M. (2010). Testing causal relationships in the norm activation model: The role of values, problem awareness, and personal norm. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*.
- Steg, L., Perlaviciute, G., van der Werff, E., & Lurvink, J. (2014). The significance of hedonic values for environmentally relevant attitudes, preferences, and actions. *Environment and Behavior*, 46(2), 163–192.
- Zaremozhzabieh, Z., Samah, A. A., Omar, S. Z., Bolong, J., & Kamarudin, S. (2021). The effects of consumer attitude on green purchase intention: A meta-analytic path analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 132, 732–743. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.10.053>
- Zeithaml, V. A. (1988). Consumer perceptions of price, quality, and value: A means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *Journal of Marketing*, 52(3), 2–22.