

CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION OF THE RESEARCH

1.1. Rationale

Green consumption is becoming an emerging trend in many countries around the world, but this trend in Vietnam has not been paid proper attention to. The number of Vietnamese youths aged 34 and below accounts for more than 50% of the population, which is of high growth and such people can quickly grasp modern trends. A survey of the project “Promoting the youth’s consumption of eco-friendly products” organized by VESDI (Vietnam Environment & Sustainable Development Institute) shows that 45% of young people are willing to change their habits to more sustainable consumption, 50% of them will put environmental benefits over their personal interests when using some certain eco-friendly products and 42% are ready to impose the environmental benefits on any products. Awareness of youth about green product consumption has undoubtedly made positive changes. Simultaneously, as young people are increasingly educated; they are paying more attention to the environment. Recently, they have participated more in the research on green purchase behavior of consumers, especially in Asian countries (Lee, 2008, 2009; Wu, 2010; Suki, 2013).

It is evidently shown that there have been positive changes in the awareness of young people about green consumption. Therefore, the green marketing strategy to raise the awareness of young consumers about the environment proves to be the mission of the marketers to the society, and this also aims at creating competitive advantages for businesses.

Up to now, regarding this research area, there have not been many studies applying the Terror Management Theory (TMT) and Social Learning Theory (SLT) to explore the relationship between psychological aspects and environmental factors on green purchase intention of young people, from which there lays a scientific basis to propose policy implications in order to enhance green purchase intention for the young customer segment in Vietnam. Stemming from the above reasons, the author decided to choose the topic: “**Analyzing the impact of some factors on green purchase intention of young consumers in Vietnam (with the application of Terror Management Theory and Social Learning Theory)**” as the research topic for the thesis.

1.2. Research objectives

The research topic aims to achieve the specific objectives as follows:

- (1) Establishing a research model including factors affecting green purchase intentions of young people in Vietnam, approached by Terror Management Theory and Social Learning Theory;
- (2) Determining the trends and measuring the impact of such factors on green purchase intention of young people;
- (3) Assessing and comparing the impact level of those factors approached by TMT and those approached by SLT on green purchase intention.

- (4) Identifying the differences among regulatory variables (income, education, gender, age, occupation) on green purchase intention of young people;
- (5) Proposing solutions and recommendations for managers, policy makers and businesses in the promotion of those factors to enhance green purchase intention.

In order to achieve the specific research objectives above, the thesis needs to answer the following research questions:

- 1) Which are the factors in the research model analyzing the impact of factors approached by TMT and SLT on green purchase intention of Vietnamese youth?
- 2) What is the trend and the impact level of those factors on green purchase intention of young people in Vietnam?
- 3) Which factors have a stronger impact on green purchase intention of young people (are those factors related to youth psychology or external environmental factors)?
- 4) Is there a difference among the regulatory variables (income, education, gender, age, occupation) on green purchase intention of young people in Vietnam?
- 5) What are the solutions put forward by the managers, policy makers and businesses to enhance green purchase intention of young people in Vietnam?

1.3. Research object and research scope

1.3.1. Research object

The research object of the thesis is the factors affecting green purchase intention approached by Terror Management Theory and Social Learning Theory.

1.3.2. Research scope

- Research subject:

The research subject is young people in Vietnam aged from 15 to 34. This is the age group that accounts for a high proportion (over 36%) in Vietnamese population structure, which is the dynamic age group and can be of strong awareness if they are properly educated and they will be the future owners of the country. Moreover, they may face risks and challenges in the context of increasingly depleted resources, rising pollution, climate changes, diseases, etc. which can threaten both their health and living habitat. Thus, this age group is well suited for applying Terror Management Theory and Social Learning Theory.

- Spatial scope: Due to certain limitations, the thesis focused on Ho Chi Minh City only, with the largest population scale in the nation and people across the country. Thus, the survey is highly representative and provides valuable insights into green consumption.

- Time range: Secondary data were collected mainly during the period of 1970-2019. Primary data were collected over four years from 2016 to 2019.

1.4. Overview of research methodology

The thesis adopted a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods.

1.5. Obtained research findings

* *Theoretical contributions:*

(1) Proposing two models to study the factors affecting green purchase intention of young people, approached by Terror Management Theory and Social Learning Theory.

The model studying the impact of factors approached by Terror Management Theory showed that psychological factors had an influence on green purchase intention of young people, including: Personal self-esteem, Fear of death, Awareness of pollution-related death and Social responsibility.

The model studying the impact of factors approached by Social Learning Theory indicated that green purchase intention of young people is under the influence of social learning factors, including: Learning from Reference group, Learning from the forum and community, School learning through the intermediate variable that is Attitude towards green purchase behavior. In particular, school learning is a new influencing factor that has not been mentioned in previous studies.

(2) The two research models simultaneously performed testing on a survey sample to evaluate and compare the impact of the two groups of factors approached by the two theories of Terror Management and Social Learning. This is a new contribution that has not been widely made in previous studies. Therefore, the research findings will play as the foundation for general theory of factors affecting green purchase intention of young consumers.

* *Practical contributions*

(1) Awareness of pollution-related death is a strongly influencing factor on green purchase intention through the attitude toward green purchase. Although young people are concerned about environmental issues and taking action to protect the environment, their attitudes formed under the impact of this factor are quite feeble.

(2) Learning from the forum and the community, school learning has a considerable impact on green purchase intention of young people. Learning from social media is a factor that has little effect on green purchase intention; Communication via television and radio has no longer been suitable for young people.

(3) The research findings conclude the difference of green purchase intention for different regulatory variables: occupation, education and income.

(4) The research findings reveal that factors related to young people's psychology have stronger impact than those from the external environment through learning mechanisms.

(5) Finally, the thesis proposes a number of recommendations and solutions for managers, policy makers and providers of green products with a management

orientation, reasonable allocation of resources to enhance green purchase intention of young potential customers in Vietnam nowadays.

1.6. Structure of thesis

The thesis is divided into 5 specific chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: General introduction of the research

Chapter 2: Theoretical background and research model

Chapter 3: Research methodology

Chapter 4: Research findings

Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH MODEL

2.1. Research concepts

- **Green products:** Products that do not harm the environment with ingredients that cannot harm the environment (Ranai Kordshouli et al., 2012). According to Chen and Chai (2010), green products are those using less toxic materials and can be recycled or using less packaging to reduce the impact on the environment.

- **Green consumption:** Mainieri et al. (1997) stated that green consumption is the behavior of buying eco-friendly and green products. These are products that facilitate the long-term goal of protecting and preserving the environment. Connolly and Prothero (2008) defined green consumption as the willingness of consumers to buy and consume eco-friendly products.

- **Green purchase intention:** Relative power of consumers on the purpose to carry out a certain behavior, expressing their intention to make actual purchase of green products of consumers in the future (Aman et al., 2012). According to Chen and Chang (2012), green purchase intention is the possibility of which consumers will buy a specific product for themselves that will protect the environment.

2.2. Terror Management Theory and the factors affecting green purchase intention approached by Terror Management Theory

The Terror Management Theory proposed by Jeff Greenberg, Sheldon Solomon and Tom Pyszczynski (1986) is the theory that studies human psychology.

The Terror Management Theory assumes that fear of death is deeply rooted in the awareness of death, supposing that this is a unique human capability exercised by cognitive abilities such as self-awareness, abstract thought and innate self-defense, which is also common in animals. The Terror Management Theory has been developed to shed light on the broad demands for the meaning and appreciation of the safety effort in mind, stemming from the strong concern about death (Burke, Martens and Faucher, 2010).

The Terror Management Theory proposes that a basic psychological conflict is the result of possessing an instinct of self-defense while recognizing that death is inevitable and, to a certain extent, unpredictable. This conflict creates terror, and

the terroris, in its turn, controlled by embracing cultural values, or mechanisms of action to cope with, making life meaningful and of lasting value.

The Terror Management Theory is often used as a theoretical basis to explain the behavior related to human psychology in different areas of research, such as cultural and psychological studies (Yetim, 2003); the smoking behavior (Arndt et al., 2009; Hansen et al., 2010); the driving behavior (Jessop et al; 2008), the pro-environmental behavior (Fritsche and Häfner, 2012). Recently, some authors have studied the Terror Management Theory or some aspects of the Terror Management Theory applied to green consumption.

These studies have indicated that those factors related to human psychology such as fear of death (Cheng and Angelina Le, 2015; Rahimah et al., 2018; Mann and Wolfe, 2016); self-esteem of consumers (Cheng Julian and Angelina Le, 2015), awareness of death (Cheng and Angelina Le, 2015), capacity of self-control (Tümer Kabaday et al. 2015; Rahimah et al, 2018), environmental concern (Cheng and Angelina Le, 2015; Pham Thi Lan Huong, 2014; Rahimah et al, 2018), social responsibility of individuals (Cheng and Angelina Le, 2015; Rahimah et al., 2018) have been found to have a considerable impact, directly or indirectly, on green purchase intention.

Based on the research overview, the author proposes the research model approached by the Terror Management Theory, based on the research models of Cheng and Angelina Le (2015) and Rahimah et al. (2018) to assess and identify the psychological factors of the youths affecting green purchase intention.

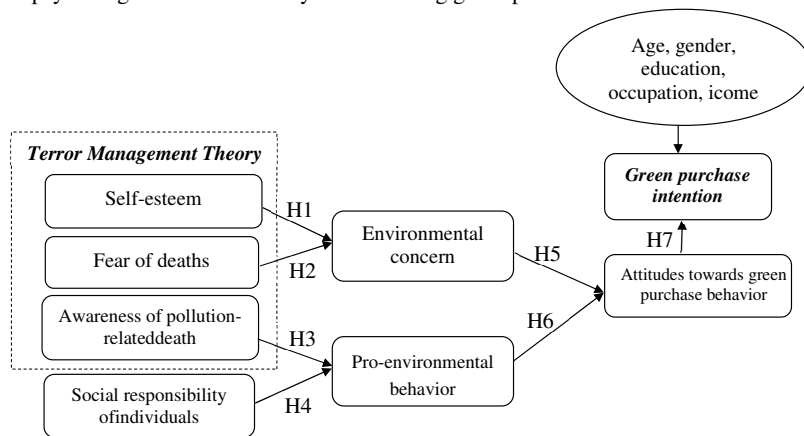


Figure 2.1: Research model referring to the impact of factors on green purchase intention of young people approached by TMT
Establishing research hypotheses about the relationships among factors in the research model
*** Personal self-esteem:**

Self-esteem is defined as the extent to which individuals feel in control of their life and environment and can affect the important outcomes in their lives (Pearlin and Schooler, 1978). Self-esteem reflects an individual's overall subjective emotional evaluation of their own value.

People with low self-esteem believe there is nothing good about themselves and that there is not much to be proud of (Guan et al., 2015). They can feel the meaninglessness and unworthiness of capacity, life goals and social identity, and will eventually be convinced of their low social values in the community (Sowislo and Orth, 2013). Therefore, they will be worried and endeavor to achieve personal values to prove their values and thereby improve their self-esteem. Individuals with high self-esteem have the ability and capacity to control their own presence and existing difficulties (Lysaker et al., 2011). They will have thoughts and feelings about managing hardship and experiencing stress (Nicolaisen et al., 2017) as well as actively use their understanding of mental states to respond and then deal with difficulties that have been solved (Carcione et al., 2010). In fact, their lives will still or even become more meaningful and purposeful. If such worried consumers master the high ownership, they will have better mental psychology, which is their self-esteem in managing their lives in a certain condition of environmental degradation. Therefore, they may pay attention to and change their attitudes/ behaviors towards fear of death by moving towards mental norms about the environment, i.e. paying attention to the environment and having positive behaviors in their daily lives. Therefore, the author proposes the hypothesis:

H1: Individual self-esteem about environmental issues of young consumers has a positive impact on environmental concern.

*** Fear of death:**

Fear of death is a negative and stressful feeling that people have when thinking about death (Mahboubah Dadfar et al., 2017). Fear of death forms the basis of the Terror Management Theory, which is conceptualized as a conscious contemplation of the actual death and the negative assessment of that reality (Dickstein, 1972). According to Greenberg et al. (1986), personal fear of death determines most of their daily behaviors. Such thoughts will motivate individuals to reduce their fear by thinking and acting more ecologically, such as reducing the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as waste and pollutant. Therefore, individuals will express the eco-friendly trends such as environmental concern and environmental behavior to relieve their fear (Cheng et al., 2015). Vess and Arndt (2008) found that awareness of student mortality affected their concerns about environment.

Dadfar et al. (2017) develop a measurement of psychological attributes related to students' fear of death with disease awareness. Most students are concerned about death stemming from disease problems. In another case, Mann and Wolfe (2016) find that existing flood-related fear provokes consumers' concerns about

flooding issues. These studies provide suggestions of awareness of death concerns that can amplify the environmental concern with more positive attitude towards the consumption of eco-friendly products. Thus, the author puts forth the following hypothesis:

H2: Fear of death of consumers has a positive impact on the environmental concern.

*** Awareness of pollution-related death**

Awareness of pollution-related death is a response to fears and worries about individual death related to environmental issues (Dadfar et al., 2017). It demonstrates the degree to which personal self-awareness and consciousness should be considered in relation to their response to fear and awareness of their death. Awareness of mortality due to environmental pollution is an aspect related to human psychological factors, an act or process of acquiring knowledge and insights through thoughts, experience and attention, assessment of the negative environmental impacts leading to the risk of death.

Over the past few decades, negative impacts on the environment, particularly the increasing presence of floods, water and air pollution, climate change, biodiversity, losses, etc. have remained and increasingly stood out, being the most serious problem the world has ever faced with (Yang, 2015). This differentiation of the environment has a negative impact on personal health and security, thereby enhancing the community interest in ecological issues and stimulating the thinking of death (Chowdhary and et al, 2018). With such impact, environmental degradation will bring concerns and worries about their own lives to their loved ones (Vess and Arndt, 2008), causing the feelings of insecurity for individuals about the uncertainty of their lives and the likelihood of vulnerability leading to death (Mann and Wolfe, 2016). These thoughts will motivate individuals to relieve their fear by thinking and worrying, as well as acting in a more ecological way, like reducing the use of natural resources and toxic materials, waste and pollutants. Therefore, individuals can deal with the insecurity caused by environmental disruptions and their consequences. As a result, individuals will express environmental friendliness trends, take environmental protection actions with a more positive attitude towards environmental issues and consume green products to relieve their fear (Rahimah et al, 2018). Therefore, the author proposes the following hypothesis:

H3: Awareness of pollution-related death of consumers has a positive impact on pro-environmental behavior.

*** Social responsibility of the individual**

Responsibility of individual related to the ethical aspect of consumers is defined as ethical principles and standards that guide the conduct of individuals in the process of buying and using goods and services (Muncy and Vitell, 1992). Therefore, according to this definition, consumers have at least two main responsibilities. First, regarding the responsibility to other relevant parties in

interpersonal relationships, they are responsible for acting in a standard manner relating to the possession, use and disposal of goods and services. Such responsibility can be named as consumer ethics. Second, in terms of responsibility to the whole society, all consumers are bound to avoid doing harm to the society, even actively taking steps for the benefits of the society. This responsibility is called the social responsibility of the individual.

Mohr et al. (2001) define a socially responsible consumer as a person based on purchase, use, and disposal of his products with a view to alleviating or eliminating any harmful effects and maximizing long-term beneficial effects on the society. Recently, Quazi et al. (2016) argued that social responsibility of individuals is the individual and collective commitments, actions and decisions that consumers consider to be the right thing to do in their interactions with producers during the trade and consumption of goods and services.

Social responsibility of individuals, within the scope of this study, addresses individual concerns about their compatriots and participating in collective actions that support common goals (Mathur, 2013). Those who feel socially responsible will be aware of solving problems for others, even if there is nothing to gain from such behaviors (Davis et al., 2017). As noted, there is a widespread environmental degradation and the harmful consequences are obvious, which has become a fundamental and important social issue (Lindh, 2018). A serious threat to human survival faced up with by present generations has emerged (Dagher and Itani, 2014). As environmental tragedies are disasters and that ecological ones are foreseeable as well as emergencies being of great importance to human survival, those who are socially responsible will consider such ecological problems as their own responsibilities to solve and avoid them. Such individuals will continually monitor and pay more attention to the mystery of these ecological issues together with the causes, consequences and actions that should be taken to reduce environmental harm, relieve ecological sufferings, and take positive actions on ecological issues (Davis et al., 2017). Social responsibility of individuals not only brings in personal attitude towards ecological consciousness (Mathur, 2013; Mostafa, 2007a) but also enhances their perspective to face and address such ecological disasters. Therefore, the author makes the following hypothesis:

H4: The social responsibility of individuals has a positive impact on pro-environmental behavior.

*** Environmental concern**

Aman et al. (2012) define environmental concern as the level of emotion and commitment to environmental issues. Kalafatis et al. (1999) describe the environmental concern as the consumer's awakening and awareness of the fact that the environment is dangerous and that the natural resources are limited. Environmental concern is manifested in many ways, which can have a greater impact on some behaviors and it can be reflected in the daily activities of

consumers.

Environmental concern is a form of attitude that expresses fear, passion, and concern about the consequences of the environment. The majority of studies claim that environmental concern is considered to be a general attitude towards the environment, focusing on rational and emotional judgment of environmental protection (Bamberg, 2003), without relating to a specific object or a specific action for the environment. Hines et al. (1987) classify attitudes towards the environment into those towards the environment and those towards specific environmental behaviors, which show that particular attitudes have a powerful influence and more meaning for environmental behavior than the general attitude towards the environment. Therefore, the impact of environmental concern as a general attitude towards the environment on the specific behavior for the environment should be indirectly considered through attitudes towards environmental-specific behavior. (Bamberg, 2003).

According to Ajzen (1991), attitudes refer to positive or negative appreciation, emotions and trends of individuals towards an object, problem, idea or person. Attitude is a psychological emotion that arises when an individual engages in certain behaviors. In this study, the green purchase attitude acted as a factor in the psychological tendency of consumers in the purchase of green products, with support or dissatisfaction.

(Schwartz, 1977) argued that awareness of consequences will activate standards among individuals regarding their moral obligations, forming their own social behaviors. Consequently, environmental concerns will have a significant impact on the extent to which individuals are motivated to change their self-related environmental practices (Seguin, Pelletier and Hunsley, 1998). Those who care about the environment will be aware of environmental problems, causes and consequences, such as over consumption and global warming. Such a sense of environment will lead individuals towards an eco-conscious attitude (Mostafa, 2007b). Consequently, the sense of moral obligation to protect the environment and save the irritated world is raised, and thus, the friendly environment is activated to lessen damages, preserve or even benefit the damaged planet. Finally, individuals are motivated and sought to exhibit environmentally conscious behavior (Fritzsche and Häfner, 2012), such as green consumption (Mostafa, 2007b; Paul et al., 2016) and other supporting activities related to green consumption issues, to purchase eco-friendly products (Paul et al., 2016), even with the intention of paying higher fees (Nishitani and Itoh, 2016). These individuals will also tend to consume and handle fewer sources and materials in their daily activities. Moreover, they will enthusiastically take care of the environment and actively promote environmental protection by attending events organized by environmental organizations, participating in environmental protection campaigns (Rahimah et al., 2018). It means the concerns of individuals related to the environment in general, or to the severity of ecological issues will

affect their readiness to purchase eco-friendly products and their environmental behavior (Rahimah et al., 2018). Previous empirical studies show a positive relationship between environmental concerns and attitudes towards green purchase behavior (Pham Thi Lan Huong, 2014; Nguyen The Khai and Nguyen Thi Lan Anh, 2016; Cheng; and Angelina Le, 2015; Rahimah et al., 2018). Therefore, the author makes the following hypothesis:

H5: Environmental concern has a positive impact on attitude towards green purchase behavior

*** Pro-environmental behavior**

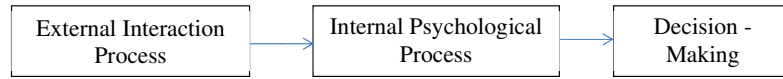
Pro-environmental behavior includes actions related to human behaviors and practices in order to prevent environmental degradation. It can also be understood that pro-environmental acts are those related to activities of keeping the environment clean and pure, improving the environment, ensuring the ecological balance, preventing and overcoming negative consequences caused by humans and nature to the environment, rationally exploiting and using as well as saving natural resources.

Those who display pro-environmental behavior will take proactive actions, such as adopting a voluntary simple lifestyle, and participate in environmental activities (Yuriev et al., 2018). Accordingly, human behavior is regulated and environmental damages are likely to be controlled (Kim and Moon, 2012). Finding a way to engage in social actions to minimize the negative impact of themselves and public behaviors on the natural world (Schmitt et al., 2018), these individuals will support the product consumption in a way that minimizes resource usage, reduces waste and saves materials and energy to lessen the harm to our planet. Therefore, they will be ready to purchase and consume green products, such as eco-friendly tissue paper, biodegradable detergents and energy-saving light bulbs (Barbarossa and Pelsmacker, 2016), and thus, the environment can obviously be preserved. A number of studies have shown a positive relationship between pro-environmental behavior and attitudes towards green purchase behavior (Cheng and Angelina Le, 2015; Rahimah et al., 2018). Therefore, the following hypothesis is put forth:

H6: Pro-environmental behavior of consumers has a positive impact on attitude towards green purchase behavior

2.3. Social Learning Theory and the factors affecting green purchase intention approached by Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory was introduced by psychologist Albert Bandura in 1971, which argues that the external influences on human behavior through intermediaries are cognitive factors. The cognitive processes are involved in deciding which of the various external events would be observed and how the individual would receive and react to them. Awareness affects human behavior.



Source: Chen et al. (2017)

Figure 2.2: The process leading to human behavior

The process of external influence is the process of learning from the environment through the learning observation process.

There have been a number of studies exploring the impact of several factors of social learning on green purchase intention of consumers shown in the following table.

Table 2.4: Summary of factors affecting green purchase intentions approached by Social Learning Theory

| Influencing factors | Impact direction | Author/year |
|----------------------------------|------------------|---|
| Subjective standards | + | Smith and Paladino (2010); Tarkiainen and Sundqvist (2005); Wang (2013); Nguyen Thi Huong Giang and Ho Ngoc Tran (2014); Nguyen Vu Hung et al. (2015); Nguyen Thi Tuyet Mai et al. (2017) |
| Social influence | + | Pham Thi Lan Huong (2014); Nguyen The Khai and Nguyen Thi Lan Anh (2016) |
| Influence of the reference group | + | Bang et al, 2000; Bamberg, 2003; Lee, 2008) |
| Green brand image | + | Usman Mahmood et al. (2014) |
| Green advertising | + | Usman Mahmood et al. (2014); Anjani and Aksari (2016); Rahbar et al. (2011) |
| Green promotion | + | Zhu et al. (2013); Bagheri (2014) |
| Eco labels | + | Smith and Paladino (2010); Rahbar et al. (2011); Kong et al. (2014); Anjani and Aksari (2016) |
| Social and commercial components | + | Chen et al. (2017) |

Source: Compiled from literature review

The social learning factors approached by the Social Learning Theory can be divided into three (03) main groups: (1) Stimulating factors belonging to the company such as: green packaging, green advertising, eco-labels, brand image. Such factors affect consumers' perceptions mainly through communication activities, (2) Social-related factors such as subjective standards, social influence, reference group influence collectively referred to as reference group; (3) Social

and commercial components (forums and online communities). These factors affect consumers' perceptions and attitudes through interactions between individuals and social forces. Such factors are collectively referred to as situational or environmental factors

For many previous studies, theory of reasoned action (TRA) and theory of planned behavior (TPB) have been explored by various authors; however the Social Learning Theory has not been studied by many in the research of green consumption. Since then, the author proposes a model to study the impact of factors on green purchase intention of young people approached by the Social Learning Theory and related studies, to evaluate and determine the factors affecting green purchase intention through learning mechanism from the environment.

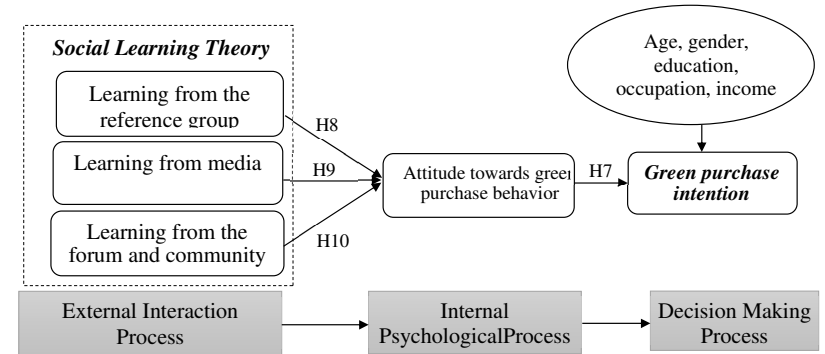


Figure 2.3: Research model of impact of factors on green purchase intention of young people approached by SLT

Building research hypotheses about the relationships among factors in the research model

*** Learning from the reference group**

Reference group is defined as the influence of an individual or a group in reality or in a clear imagination on personal judgment, inspiration or behavior (Park and Lessig, 1977). Reference group includes family, friends, colleagues, celebrities, experts, those who have a strong impact on the learning consciousness of young people. This is a good anticipating factor for young consumer behavior, once social inclusion is important for this segment. The impact of the reference group arises when individual perceptions, thoughts, emotions and behaviors are influenced by others (Pham Thi Lan Huong, 2014). For young people, the influential information sources come from family, friends, teachers and schools, in which, the influence of friends is the most important, especially, friends have a strong influence on many aspects of consumer

behavior, standards and personal values (Bindah and Othman, 2012). Many studies have recognized and pointed out the influence of the reference group on individual green purchase intention (Bang et al., 2000; Bamberg, 2003; Lee, 2010; Pham Thi Lan Huong, 2014). Therefore, the following hypothesis is given:

H8: Learning from the reference group has a positive impact on attitude towards green purchase behavior.

*** Learning from social media**

The purchase decision of consumers depends on the information that they collect from various sources, including influential media. Various studies have shown that exposure to environmental messages through the media positively affects young consumers (Holbert et al., 2003; Good, 2006; Joshi and Rahman, 2016.). The media has a great influence and can enhance important environmental issues, affect the thinking process of consumers (Holbert et al., 2003; Bindah and Othman, 2012). Communication campaigns through various means have been shown to positively affect consumer recycling behavior (Mee and Clewes, 2004). The media provides consumers with necessary information, thanks to which they have environmental knowledge and form a positive attitude towards environmental issues. Many studies have indicated the impact of environmental knowledge on green purchase attitude and intention of consumers (Waseem Akbar et al., 2014; Nguyen Thi Huong Giang and Ho Ngoc Tran, 2014). Therefore, the following hypothesis is given:

H9: Learning from social media has a positive impact on attitude towards green purchase behavior.

*** Learning from the forum and community**

Based on the Social Learning Theory, individuals observe the model when engaging in various exchange behaviors and they pay attention to the information sources received and aided for these behaviors (indirect enhancement). If the observer appreciates the sources of aided information received according to the model, he/she will try to copy the model behavior and collect similar information (Chen et al., 2017). Therefore, the process involves three types of variables: human, behavior and environment, with mutually influential impact on one another (Bandura and McClelland, 1977). Forums and communities provide the environment for social learning of customers. Purchase intention describes customers' behavior in exchanging activities. Therefore, (Chen et al., 2017) suggested that learning experience collected at forums and communities can stimulate a positive attitude from consumers. A positive attitude continues to draw attention to buying green products on forums and communities. Therefore, the hypothesis is put forth as follows:

H10: Learning from the forum and community has a positive impact on attitudes towards green purchase behavior

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Qualitative research methods

3.1.1. In-depth interview

* Objectives of in-depth interview:

- Enhancing and completing the proposed research model;
- Checking the suitability of the scales;
- Developing new scales that are suitable for the Vietnamese context.

* Implementation: Implemented by seven lecturers (three PhDs and four masters) specialized in business administration and marketing. They are all working at Finance-Banking and Administration Faculty, Quy Nhon University. Moreover, the author consulted with a number of lecturers at the University of Economics of Ho Chi Minh City and National Economics University. The author conducted a small seminar at the Faculty office which lasted 90 minutes, during the seminar, observing and discussing techniques were applied. After that, the author summarized and analyzed data collected to draw a conclusion.

* Findings:

- Adding two more relationships between Fear of death and Awareness of pollution-related death with Green purchase attitude.
- Adding School learning scale to the model due to the role and importance of the school's education in forming awareness among young people.

3.1.2. Group discussion:

* Target:

- Checking the suitability of the scales.
- Developing scales for new factors.

* Methodology: interviewees were divided into two groups

- Group one: seven students in Ho Chi Minh City from 18 to 21 years old.
- Group two: eight office employees from 24 to 33 years old.

The author designed two discussion scenarios related to the research model and the scale.

* Result:

- School learning scale was established with three variables.
- The terminology of some variables in the few scales was adjusted.

Proposed research model after qualitative research.

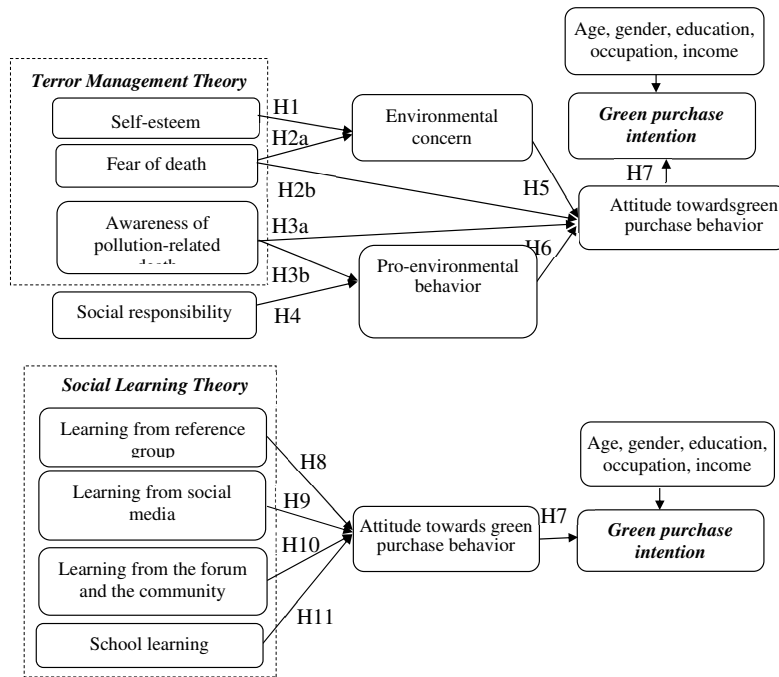


Figure 3.2: Official research model

➤ Research hypotheses:

H1: Young consumers' self-esteem about environmental issues has a positive impact on environmental concerns.

H2a: Consumer's fear of death has a positive impact on environmental concerns.

H2b: Consumer's fear of death has a positive impact on green purchase attitude.

H3a: Consumer's awareness of pollution-related death has a positive impact on green purchase attitude.

H3b: Consumer's awareness of pollution-related death has a positive impact on pro-environmental behavior.

H4: Consumer's social responsibility has a positive impact on pro-environmental behavior.

H5: Environmental concern has a positive impact on green purchase attitude.

H6: Pro-environmental behavior has a positive impact on green purchase attitude.

H7: Green purchase attitude has a positive impact on green purchase intention.

H8: Learning from reference group has a positive impact on green purchase attitude.

H9: Learning from social media has a positive impact on green purchase attitude.

H10: Learning from the forum and the community has a positive impact on green purchase attitude.

H11: School learning has a positive impact on green purchase attitude.

➤ Research measurement

The thesis applied research scales that are commonly used in the field of green consumption in Asian countries such as China, India, Taiwan, Hong Kong. These countries have a similar context with Vietnam, in which many scales are focused on young people, thus these research scales are valid and reliable for applying in Vietnam. Fear of death construct includes six items namely LTV1-LTV6 adapted from Dadfar et al. (2017). Besides, awareness of pollution-related death includes six items from NTV1 to NTV6 adapted from Homburg and Stolberg (2006). Social responsibility construct covers four items TXH adapted from Rahimah et al. (2018). Regarding environmental concern construct adapted from Nguyen Thị Lan Huong (2014), four items QMT were developed. The pro-environmental behavior construct involves four items namely HMT1, HMT2, HMT3 and HMT4 adapted from Rahimah et al. (2018).

The learning from reference group construct includes five items (HTK) adapted from Lee (2008). Relating to the learning from social media construct, four items were adapted from Joshi and Rahman (2016), they are HTT1, HTT2, HTT3, and HTT4. The author adapted Chen et al. (2017) to develop three items of the Learning from the forum and the community, namely HCD. School learning construct has three items (HNT) established from the qualitative research above.

3.2. Pilot quantitative research

* **Objective:** To evaluate the reliability of the measurement and eliminating unsatisfactory items.

* **Methodology:** A survey with 150 samples was carried out applying the non-probability sampling method and convenient sampling technique. Conducting the reliability assessment of the scale through Cronbach's Alpha coefficient.

* **Result:** All constructs reach the allowed reliability. However, the learning from reference group and the learning from social media constructs have items HTK1 and HTT2 eliminated because corrected item-total correlation was less than 0.3. After pilot research, the learning from reference group construct has five items, and the learning from social media construct has three items.

3.3. Official quantitative research

* **Objective:** To make model's measurement and hypotheses' assessment; To evaluate the impact level of independent factors on green purchase intentions; To test the difference of green purchase intentions construct under the impact of regulatory constructs.

* **Implementation process:** The reliability of all the constructs was tested with Cronbach's Alpha, Exploratory Factor Analysis, Structural Equation Analysis, Structural Equation Modeling, Chi-square Test to compare the difference of regulatory variables.

* **Sample size and sampling method:**

The research focuses on young people aged 15 - 34 years in Ho Chi Minh City. The city has more than 8,993,082 people, which is the most populous city in the country. The city has a young population structure, the age group of 15 - 34 years old accounts for over 32% of the total population. With a population from all across the country, the survey is highly representative and provides valuable insights into green consumption.

Sampling by non-probability method and convenient sampling technique. There were 420 responses, in which direct responses were 285, online responses were 135.

After testing and eliminating the incomplete responses, the remaining number used for official data analysis was 353 (reaching 84%).

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1. Research findings of factors affecting green purchase intention (approached by Terror Management Theory)

4.1.1. Testing reliability of the scales with Cronbach's alpha

The reliability test results of the scales show that all scales reach the permitted reliability, so they are used in the EFA analysis.

4.1.2. EFA analysis

- KMO coefficient calculated from the sample is $0.904 > 0.5$, with $\text{sig} < 0.05$. Thus, the sample size of the survey is eligible to conduct factor analysis.

- After confirmatory factor analysis, 3 items QMT1, LTV2, LTT1 were eliminated because the loading factors were less than 0.5; the remaining 31 items measuring the scales were extracted into 8 main factors at Eigenvalue 1.007. The factors are the same as the hypotheses.

4.1.3. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

CFA analysis for the constructs shows that the standardized weights of all constructs are greater than 0.5 with $p = 0.000$.

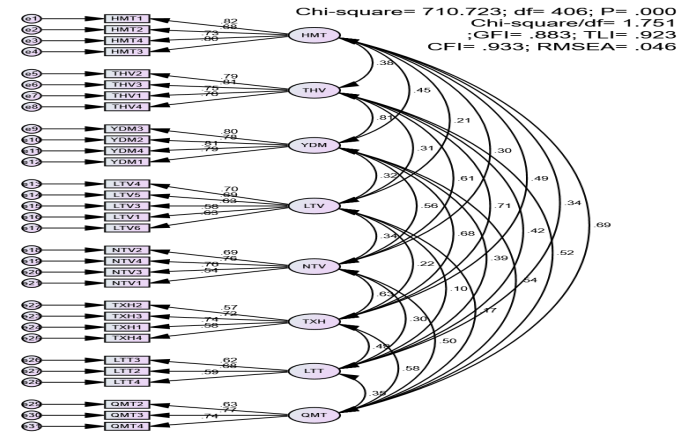


Figure 4.1: Evaluation of suitability of the model

The analysis shows the suitability of the measurement model (Chi-square = 710.723; DF = 406; CMIN / DF = 1.751 < 2; $p = 0.000$; TLI = 0.923; CFI = 0.933; RMSEA = 0.046 < 0.05, these indicators are at good level GFI = 0.883; NFI = 0.858; AGFI = 0.858 is at good level > 0.8).

Table 4.5: Standardized weights of observation variables

| | Estimate | | Estimate |
|---------------|----------|---------------|----------|
| HMT1 <--- HMT | .816 | NTV2 <--- NTV | .687 |
| HMT2 <--- HMT | .678 | NTV4 <--- NTV | .758 |
| HMT4 <--- HMT | .733 | NTV3 <--- NTV | .761 |
| HMT3 <--- HMT | .801 | NTV1 <--- NTV | .537 |
| THV2 <--- THV | .790 | TXH2 <--- TXH | .571 |
| THV3 <--- THV | .812 | TXH3 <--- TXH | .716 |
| THV1 <--- THV | .755 | TXH1 <--- TXH | .739 |
| THV4 <--- THV | .765 | TXH4 <--- TXH | .576 |
| YDM3 <--- YDM | .798 | LTT3 <--- LTT | .620 |
| YDM2 <--- YDM | .775 | LTT2 <--- LTT | .684 |
| YDM4 <--- YDM | .807 | LTT4 <--- LTT | .591 |
| YDM1 <--- YDM | .792 | QMT2 <--- QMT | .634 |
| LTV4 <--- LTV | .703 | QMT3 <--- QMT | .772 |
| LTV5 <--- LTV | .688 | QMT4 <--- QMT | .738 |
| LTV3 <--- LTV | .630 | | |
| LTV1 <--- LTV | .582 | | |
| TV6 <--- LTV | .635 | | |

Source: Author's analysis based on the research sample

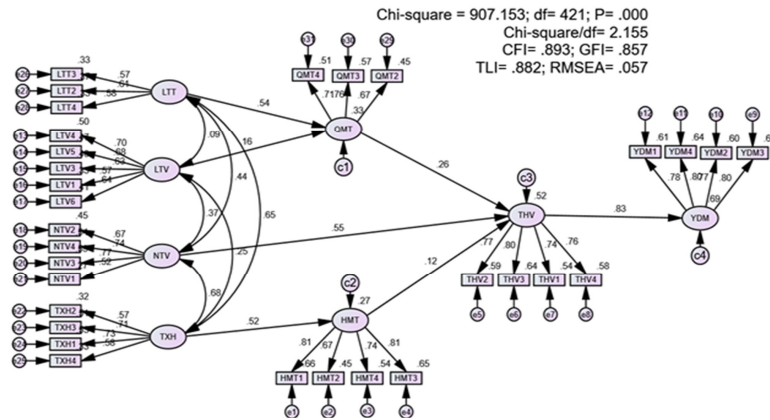
The standardized weights of observation variables in the model are higher

than 0.5, so the scale reaches the convergence value, the model reaches a comprehensive effect.

4.1.4. Testing models and research hypotheses

After three tests, the results of SEM in evaluating the impact of the factors on the green purchase intention of young people as follows:

The suitability assessment indicators of the model are valid: Chi-square = 907.153; DF = 421; CMIN / DF = 2.155 < 3; p = 0.00; RMSEA = 0.057 < 0.08; TLI = 0.882; CFI = 0.893; GFI = 0.857 which is quite close to 0.9). Consequently, the model is appropriate. The standardized weights have positive signs reflecting the positive effect of the factors. P-value in assessing the impact of factors in the research model is less than 0.05, the relationships between the factors and the



green purchase intention are statistically significant.

Figure 4.3: SEM analysis - Standardization coefficient

Table 4.9: Standardized weights of the factors

| | | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | P |
|-----|----------|----------|------|--------|------|
| QMT | <--- LTT | .539 | .119 | 5.837 | *** |
| QMT | <--- LTV | .158 | .054 | 2.368 | .018 |
| HMT | <--- TXH | .522 | .118 | 6.908 | *** |
| THV | <--- QMT | .262 | .055 | 4.478 | *** |
| THV | <--- HMT | .117 | .044 | 2.175 | .030 |
| THV | <--- NTV | .546 | .076 | 7.743 | *** |
| YDM | <--- THV | .828 | .072 | 12.794 | *** |

Source: Author's analysis based on the research sample

Thus, the two hypotheses were not supported including H2a (Consumer's fear of death has a positive impact on green purchase attitude) and H3b (Consumer's awareness of pollution-related death has a positive impact on pro-environmental behavior). They become unacceptable due to the sig coefficient > 0.05.

4.1.5. Testing the difference of regulatory constructs (gender, age, job, education) to the green purchase intention

In order to assess the impact of regulatory constructs on the green purchase intention, whether or not there are any differences among regulatory constructs, a multi-group structure analysis is conducted.

- The analysis results show that there is no difference in the green purchase intention according to the gender of the youth.

- There is a statistically significant difference in green purchase intention according to different groups of age, occupation, education and income.

4.2. Research findings of the impact of factors on the green purchase intention (approached by Social Learning Theory)

4.2.1. Testing the reliability of the scales by Cronbach alpha

All constructs have Cronbach's Alpha coefficients greater than 0.7, which ensures the permitted reliability for EFA analysis.

4.2.2. EFA analysis

KMO coefficient calculated from the sample is 0.817 > 0.5, with sig = 0.00 < 0.05. Thus, the sample size of the survey is eligible to conduct factor analysis.

Regarding FEA analysis results, all variables have loading factors greater than 0.5, they are loaded into 6 groups with 21 items measuring the constructs extracted at total eigenvalue is 1.239 and extraction sums of squared loadings is 65,889%. All factors remain the same as the hypotheses mentioned above.

4.2.3. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

CFA analysis for a 6-concept measurement model showed that the standardized weights of all factors is greater than 0.5 with p < 0.001. The analysis shows the suitability of the measurement model (Chi-square = 264.095; DF = 174; CMIN / DF = 1.518 < 2; p = 0.00; GFI = 0.933; TLI = 0.973; CFI = 0.978; RMSEA = 0.038 < 0.05, these indicators are quite good).

The standardized weights of the items in the model are all greater than 0.5, so the scale reaches the convergence value.

4.2.4. Testing model and research hypotheses

The results of the 3rd SEM analysis shows that the P-value in assessing the impact of factors in the research model is less than 0.05. So the relationships between the factors and green purchase intention are statistically significant.

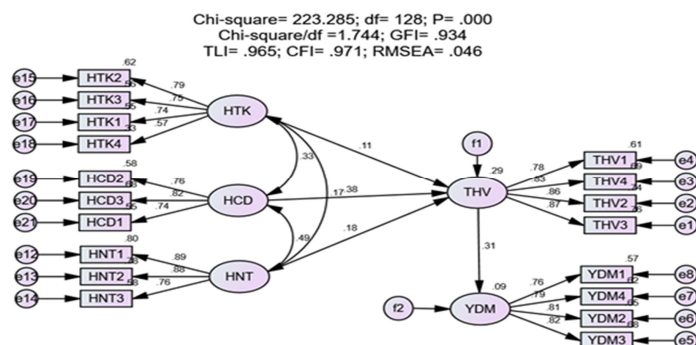


Figure 4.6: 3rd SEM analysis – standardization

The indicators assessing the suitability of the model have the following values: Chi-square = 223.285; DF = 128; CMIN / DF = 1.744 <2; p = 0.00; RMSEA = 0.046 <0.05; TLI = 0.965; CFI = 0.971; GFI = 0.934. These figures are quite good, the model is considered appropriate. The result is shown as the following table.

Table 4.30: Standardized weights of the factors

| | | | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | P |
|-----|------|-----|----------|------|-------|------|
| THV | <--- | HTK | .147 | .076 | 1.934 | .043 |
| THV | <--- | HCD | .380 | .071 | 5.330 | *** |
| THV | <--- | HNT | .141 | .048 | 2.914 | .004 |
| YDM | <--- | THV | .314 | .060 | 5.211 | *** |

Source: Author's analysis based on the research sample

Consequently, among 5 hypotheses in the proposed model, there are 4 supported hypotheses, only H9 (Learning from social media has a positive impact on green purchase attitude) is rejected because it has P-value as 0.459 > 0.05.

4.2.5. Testing the difference of regulatory constructs (gender, age, job, education) to the green purchase intention

The results show that:

- There is no difference in the green purchase intention according to the gender or/ and age.
- There is a statistically significant difference in green purchase intention according to different groups of occupations, education, and income.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion on research findings

5.1.1. Summary of research findings

- The results identify the factors affecting the green purchase intention of young people, by applying TMT and SLT as follows:

Self-esteem and fear of death are positively related to environmental concern. Social responsibility is discovered to play an important role in increasing environmentally friendly behavior among young people. The environmental concern, environmental protection behaviors, awareness of pollution-related death positively influence the green purchase attitude, and finally, the green purchase intention is formed.

Learning from the forum and the community, School learning and Learning from social media positively influence the green purchase intention to buy green via green purchase attitude as the intermediary. In particular, the strongest impact comes from learning from forum and the community. This result reflects the current social trend, with the fast development of information technology, especially the internet that forms a global connection. Social networking has become a popular communication and entertainment method utilized by most young people today. Millions of people go online every day, they go online for working, studying, searching for documents, etc. Social networks are dominating young people's time at a dizzying rate, thus the attitude of young people is highly impacted by information from forums and communities.

Learning from social media does not impact young people's attitudes.

- Based on SEM result and positive standardized regression coefficients, relationships in both research models are all positive. Besides, based on the results of statistical analysis describing means of the constructs, it is possible to confirm that the psychological aspects of young people are more powerful than the environmental factors through the learning mechanism.

- The research findings disclose significant differences among the youth regarding age, occupation, education, and income in green purchase intention.

5.1.2. Research contribution

* Theoretical contribution:

- Firstly, the research has developed two research models describing the impact of factors on the green purchase intention of young people approached by TMT and SLT.

- Secondly, the research has identified a new relationship between fear of death and green purchase attitude through the Terror Management Theory.

- Thirdly, this research has discovered that school learning positively affects the green purchase intention of Vietnamese youth approaching SLT, which has not

been mentioned in previous studies.

- Fourthly, the research has conducted simultaneous testing on a set of data to compare the impact level of factors related to the psychological aspect and external environmental aspect.

- * Practical contribution:

- Providing information for managers with a solid basis to carry out governance activities in the planning phase.

- Suggesting businesses to implement focused investment strategies, concentrating on the psychological aspects of young consumers rather than environmental factors.

- Policymakers should make management efforts focused on social responsibility. Implementation of coordination and cooperation between government, community, and individuals will increase the efficiency of promoting the individual's social responsibility to environmental issues.

- Adopting an educational mechanism to impact youth awareness in raising environmental awareness and forming a positive attitude towards green consumption.

5.2. Recommendations

5.2.1. Recommendations to regulators and policymakers to increase green purchase intention

- Firstly: The results indicate that the green purchase attitude and intention depend on the environmental concerns of young consumers and their environmental protection behaviors.

- Secondly: Management efforts should focus on the individual's social responsibility. Increasing consumers' awareness of the social responsibility for the environment can be achieved through social campaigns.

- Thirdly: Enterprises need to develop plans and PR activities involving environmental issues. Encouraging volunteers from young people in these programs to demonstrate their role in the mission of calling the community to use green products.

- Fourthly: Businesses as well as policy-makers should promote green propaganda activities among young people via forums and communities.

- Fifthly: Organizations and businesses can collaborate with secondary schools, colleges and universities to organize contests with green product exploration and environmental protection issues to improve understanding and knowledge of young people on environmental protection and ecological awareness related to consumption of green products.

5.2.2 Limitation and future research

5.2.1. Limitation

- Firstly, the research model still has some limitations.

- Second, space is also limited. The research was only conducted in Ho Chi Minh City, so the results of the survey may not be generalized for the Vietnamese context.

- Thirdly, this study only evaluates young consumers, mostly including college students, and low-income people.

5.2.2. Future research

- Adding a new construct to the research model

- Conducting extended research on respondents in other major cities to ensure generalization.

- Conducting research for different age groups to expand the application of the research findings.