The Impact of Word of Mouth on Intention to Purchase Green Products: An Empirical Study

تأثير كلمة الفم المنطوقة على نية شراء المنتجات الخضراء: دراسة ميدانية

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine relationships between word of mouth (WOM); environmental awareness; attitude towards green products (ATGP);and intention to purchase green products (IPGP). The research employs a survey-based method. Using a 19-item questionnaire and convenience sampling method, the data were collected from 226 students enrolled at a university of Algiers (3) in Algeria. Multiple and simple linear regression was used to test the proposed hypotheses. The results show that the WOM; environmental awareness and ATGPhave a significant positive impact on consumer's IPGP. Moreover, WOM has a positive impact on both environmental awareness and ATGP; also, environmental awareness has a significant positive impact on ATGP.

Keywords: *Attitude; Awareness; Behaviour; Communication; Eco-friendly.*
Jel Classification Codes: *M12, M31.*

ملخص:

كان الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو فحص العلاقات بين كلمة الفم المنطوقة؛ الوعي البيئي؛ الاتجاه نحو المنتجات الخضراء؛ ونية شراء المنتجات الخضراء. وظف البحث طريقة المسح، وباستخدام استبيان مكون من 19 بندا وأسلوب العينة الملائمة، تم جمع البيانات من 226 طالبا مسجلين في جامعة الجزائر (3) بالجزائر. تم استخدام الانحدار الخطي البسيط والمتعدد لاختبار الفرضيات المقترحة. تظهر النتائج أن لكلمة الفم المنطوقة؛ الوعي البيئي؛ والاتجاهات تأثير إيجابي دال معنويا على نية المستهلك لشراء المنتجات الخضراء. علاوة على ذلك، لكلمة الفم تأثير إيجابي على كل من الوعي البيئي والاتجاهات نحو المنتجات الخضراء؛ أيضا، للوعي البيئي تأثير إيجابي دال على الاتجاه نحو المنتجات الخضراء.

كلمات مفتاحية: اتجاهات؛ وعي؛ سلوك؛ اتصالات؛ صداقة البيئة.

تصنيف JEL: M12، M31

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1. Introduction

Word of mouth(WOM) communication is one of the ancient means of transmitting information (Dellarocas, 2003). It is one of the most influential sources of consumer information about products (Lee &Youn, 2009). Also, one of the most important factors affecting consumer behavior (Daugherty & Hoffman, 2014). Such as influence on awareness, expectations, perceptions, attitudes, behavioral intentions, and behavior (Buttle, 1998). Consumers trust other consumers more than their trust in salesperson and manufacturer (Nieto, Hernández-Maestro, & Muñoz-Gallego, 2014). However, very little is known about how WOM operates.

It is undoubtedly that human behavior inflicts significant damage on the planet's environment (Bouarar&Mouloudj, 2021). There is a global political and social consensus on managing and increasing awareness of environmental issues as one of the most important social goals (Ham, Horvat, &Mrčela, 2016). A brief review of the green marketing literature and green products is sufficient to confirm the researchers from different countries' interest in green product purchase intention. One of the most challenging tasks of green marketing practitioners is to identify the green consumer, and then convince him to buy green products. Increased public awareness of environmental problems has led to increasing demand for sustainable and green business practices (Gadenne, Kennedy, &McKeiver, 2009).

Human behavior exerts a huge influence environment, hence, predicting behavior is of a vital importance in marketing and environmental management studies (Bouarar&Mouloudj, 2021). Intention to purchase green products (IPGP) has attracted the attention of scholars researchers (e.g. Huang, Yang,& Wang, 2014; Lasuin&Ching, 2014; Wang, 2014; Ahmad &Thyagara, 2015; Chang, 2015; Chen et al., 2016; Butt, 2017; Maichum, Parichatnon&Peng, 2017). Furthermore, previous studies have identified many factors influencing IPGP. Among the factors are social influence and perceived monetary value (Chen, Chen, & Tung, 2018); environmental consciousness and attitude towards green products (ATGP) (Maichum et al., 2017); environmental concerns and environmental knowledge (Aman, Harun,& Hussein, 2012; Mostafa, 2006); green brand knowledge (MohdSuki, 2016); attitude toward the green brand (Huang et al., 2014); environmental friendliness, green perceived value, and green loyalty (Chen et al., 2016); attitude toward the environment and perceived behavioral control intention (Mohiuddin et al., 2018); collectivism values, environmental visibility, and subjective norms (Wang, 2014); perceived consumer effectiveness (Butt, 2017); perceived product attributes (Assarut&Srisuphaolarn, 2010); green viral communication and informational interpersonal influences (Chang, 2015); self-expressive benefits(Ahmad &Thyagara, 2015); self-image (Lasuin&Ching, 2014); price and peer pressures (Sharaf& Isa, 2017).

Despite this large body of research, hardly any research has been focused on the impact of WOM on consumers' IPGP in the context of Algeria as a developing country. To bridge the gap in the literature, this study aimed to explore the relationship between WOM, environmental awareness, ATGP, and IPGP. To fulfill the purpose of the study we employed a questionnaire as a pertinent tool to collect primary data from a non-probability sample among university students.The various managerial implications have been fully addressed to enhance green marketing practitioner's ability to influence green purchasing behavior.The remainder of the

paper is structured as follows. Section 2 describes the purchase intention, and then present relevant literature reviews and hypotheses. Section 3 explains the methodology. Section 4 presents the main results, discussions thereof. Section 5 concludes, and limitations and future research agenda are outlined.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Purchase intention

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) asserts that intentions could be the stronger predictors of actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991). According to Duhaime et al. (1996), purchase intention is a step of the decision-making process where the consumer expresses his preference for a product based on his experience, beliefs, and attitudes. Chen, Chen, & Tung, (2018) defined purchase intention as "the willingness of consumers to purchase green products". Abdul Rashid (2009) explained that green purchase intention is conceptualized as the probability and willingness of a person which are prefer to purchase products that having eco-friendly features over other traditional products in their purchase considerations. In this study, purchase intention is defined as "the possibility that a consumer performs a purchase green products".

Green product purchase intention is a strong predictor of green purchase behavior (Chen, 2010). Kumar &Ghodeswar (2015) showed that consumer's green product purchase is influenced by supporting environmental protection, drive for environmental responsibility, consumers' experience with green products, environmental friendliness of companies, and social appeal**.**Anvar& Venter (2014) also found that the purchase behavior of green products influenced by ATGP.

2.2. Word of mouth (WOM)

WOM can be defined as "informal communications directed at other consumers about the ownership, usage, or characteristics of particular goods and services and/or their sellers" (Westbrook, 1987, p.261). This definition includes not only traditional forms of WOM but also online WOM, although there are some differences between them. WOM is a double-edged sword it can be a powerful tool to reach new consumers, as it can be a tool to lose them. The credibility of the source of information is an important factor for consumers in evaluating the value of that information in WOM communications. Soltani&Khavari (2015) showed that applying WOM by the receiver

is influenced by source reliability; source experience; source expertise; and evidence obtained from WOM source claims.

Medjahdi & Saoudi (2016) found that a strong correlation exists between the volume, valence of WOM communication, and marketing performance. Thus, WOM dimensions significantly affect marketing performance. Also, Podnar & Javernik (2012) demonstrated that negative WOM has an impact on consumers' attitudes and purchase probability, while the influence of positive WOM was not significant.

Positive WOM is influenced by several factors among which we find: high levels of consumer satisfaction (De Matos & Rossi, 2008); brand love and brand commitment (Maisam&Mahsa, 2016), while negative WOM is influenced by lower levels of consumer satisfaction (Johnston, 1998). A number of predictors of WOM have been identified by various researchers, some of these predictors are, quality of rapport with consumers (Macintosh, 2009); consumer loyalty (De Matos & Rossi, 2008; Ashley &Varki, 2009); satisfaction, quality, commitment, confidence, and perceived value (De Matos & Rossi, 2008); perceived customer switching costs (Lee &Romaniuk, 2009) difficulty of being able to lodge complaints (Oh, 2006).

Indeed, there are several studies supporting the significant effect of WOM on various aspects of consumer behavior. WOM has an impact on consumer emotions (Martensen&Grønholdt, 2016); reduce the risk associated with product or service (Shirsavar, Gilaninia&Almani, 2012); attitudes toward products and purchase probability (Podnar&Javernik, 2012); attitude towards the non-deceptive counterfeits (Mir, 2011); attracting new consumers (Lam, Lee, &Mizerski, 2009; Wangenheim&Bayon, 2007); intentions to buy the non-deceptive counterfeits (Mir, 2011); buying behavior (Aslam, Jadoon&Zaman, 2011).Accordingly, we assume that positive WOM about green products can have a positive effect on high levels of environmental awareness; positive ATGP; and consumer intention to purchase green products. On the basis of previous studies evidence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: WOM has a positive impact on environmental awareness.

H2: WOM has a positive impact on ATGP.

H3: WOM has a positive impact on consumer IPGP.

2.3. Environmental awareness

In English language literature, environmental concerns and environmental consciousness is usually used as a synonym for environmental awareness (Ham et al., 2016). According to viewpoint of Sánchez &Lafuente (2010), environmental consciousness consist of four main dimensions which are 1) general beliefs/ values (affective dimension); 2) information/ knowledge (cognitive dimension); 3) personal attitudes (dispositional dimension) and; 4) pro-environmental behaviour (active dimension). In our study we define environmental awareness as"the first level of environmental knowledge the individual owns about the causes and the effects of environmental damage",and it is not innate in people, but it is an acquired behavior, that can be instilled in them and change their behavior towards the environment.In simple words, it refers to the understanding of the impact of human beings on the environment, and this can lead to promoting environmentally responsible consumption.

Previous studies stated that individuals whom are environmentally informed tend to engage in environmentally-friendly behaviors (Hines, Hungerford, &Tomera, 1987). A large number of consumers show their increased awareness on the various environmental problems, and their preference for green products and ready to buy them at a premium price (Han et al., 2011).

According to Coulter et al. (2005), the quantity of information about the product affects consumers' choice of product. Hải& Mai (2013) demonstrated that individuals with a high level of environmental awareness have positive attitudes towards environmentally-friendly purchasing, besides, individuals with a higher educational level are more concerned about environmental problems and have sufficient knowledge of eco-friendly products. The level of consumer environmental awareness leads to a positive environmental attitude (Diamantopoulos et al., 2003). Environmental awareness is a part of social awareness (Ham et al., 2016). It's influenced by responsibility consciousness and agreeableness (Kaynak&Ekşi, 2014); health consciousness, environmental concern, eco-label, roles of government and non-

governmental organizations (Mohd Din, Wanni, &Sehar, 2016); education level and age range (Ziadat, 2010).

Environmental awareness can change ATGP. Environmentalawarenesseffects on environmental attitudes (Chen et al., 2018); IPGP (Ariffin et al., 2016; Karatu& Mat, 2015). Assarut&Srisuphaolarn (2010) showed that the degree of consumers' environmental consciousness has indirectly influenced IPGP through perceived product attributes and attitudes toward green products. Also, environmental consciousness can affect consumer behavior (Follows & Jobber, 2000). Bouarar, Mouloudj, &Mouloudj (2021) found that environmental concern is positively and significantly correlated with intention tostay in green hotels. However, other researchers have indicated that a high level of environmental awareness does not necessarily lead to purchase green products (Rokka&Uusitalo, 2008). In addition, Karunanayake&Wanninayake, (2015) found that product knowledge does not have a significant impact on buying intention of hybrid automobiles.We assume then that high levels of environmental awareness can have a positive effect on positive ATGP; and IPGP. On the basis of this evidence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4: Environmental awareness has a positive impact on ATGP.

H5: Environmental awareness has a positive impact on consumer IPGP.

2.4. Attitude towards green products(ATGP)

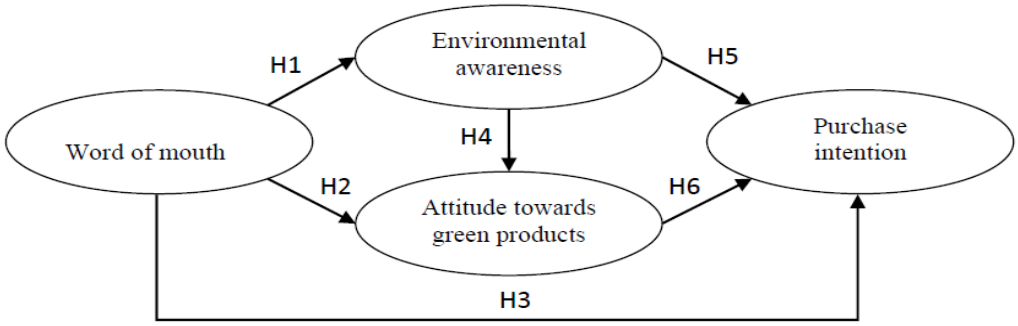
Eagly&Chaiken (1993) defined Attitude as "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor" (p. 1). From our point of view, an attitude is the state of mind which entails the extent to which a person accepts or refuses the object of attitude. In another word, attitude demonstrates the human propensity to behave positively or negatively toward the object of the attitude. Attitude is one of the most important factors to predict consumers' willingness to pay for green products (Tsen et al., 2006). Attitude toward the product is influenced by applying WOM by the receiver (Soltani&Khavari, 2015). Attitude toward the environment is influenced by environmental knowledge and awareness of consequences (Mohiuddin et al., 2018). ATGPisinfluenced by environmental concern (Kirmani& Khan, 2016); environmental knowledge, and environmental consciousness (Maichum et al., 2017).

Anvar& Venter (2014) found that ATGPsare influenced by social influence, environmental awareness, and price. Also, ATGPcan be influenced by consumers' natural environment orientation, ecological knowledge, and environmental concern (Mostafa, 2007). Chen et al., (2018) found that a product attitude is influenced by environmental awareness, individualism, subjective knowledge, and the government's role. MohdSuki, (2016) found that knowledge of green brands impacts consumers' attitudes toward green brands. Ahmad &Thyagara (2015) demonstrated that environmental concern, environmental knowledge, and self-expressive benefits would positively influence attitude toward the green brand which in turn positively influences intention to purchase green brands.Bouarar et al. (2021) found that a positive attitude significantly predicts intention to stay in green hotels. We assume then that positive ATGPs can have a positive effect on consumer IPGP. On the basis of this evidence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: ATGPs have a positive impact on consumer IPGP.

The summary of the hypothetical relationships among the variables is shown in Fig. 1.

Fig.1.The conceptual framework of this study



3. METHODOLOGY

The data collection methodology for this study is survey research. We used a questionnaire of two parts. The first part of the questionnaire includes demographic information about participants (gender, age, and level of education). In the second part of the questionnaire, we used Mir (2011) scale to measure WOM. Chen et al., (2018) scale to measure the environmental awareness; product attitude; and IPGPs. Some items have been modified to be consistent with the purpose of our study. Hence, research measurements were adapted from previous studies as can be seen in the appendix.

All measurements in the study were subjective assessments by the respondents using a five-point Likert-type scale (1 Strongly disagree, to 5 Strongly agree). Before the questionnaire was distributed, five academic professionals in green marketing were invited to review the questionnaire, to assure content validity. Minor revisions were adjusted based on their suggestions. After that, an exploratory study was conducted to ensure the reliability of each construct, using a convenience sample of 25 students at Algiers (3) university in Algeria. We chose Students to represent the sample of the study for the following reasons: (1) the number of students in Algerian universities exceeded 1.6 million; this number exceeds the population of 82 countries in the world. Therefore, we consider this category of the population significant market segment for green products companies; (2) according to Vermeir&Verbeke (2008), young adults are future consumers who can make difference in the years to come; and (3) student category compared to other categories of Algerians, are more likely to be more knowledgeable of green products, and more aware of the environmental degradation.The questionnaire was originally developed in English, and then translated into Arabic and French. The three versions of the questionnaire were distributed according to the participants' desire.

The sample is selected using non-probability convenience sampling, which includes those who have the willingness to participate in the study. The convenience sampling method is absolutely swift, handy, readily available, and cost-effective; making it is a useful appealing option to most marketing researchers.The participants were contacted by mail, facebook, or personally, and they were asked if they were willing to participate in the study. The population for the current research is students in Algeria. The unit of analysis in this study is students from the college of economic sciences, commerce, and management sciences at the University of Algiers (3), Algeria. Data collection took place from September 10 to October 20, 2019. In total, 260 questionnaires were distributed and 237 questionnaires were returned. However, the analyses were carried out on 226 questionnaires because 11 of them were either incomplete or incorrect.Detailed descriptive statistics are displayed in Table 1.Demographic information about the sample for this study showed that 135 male with the percentage of 59.73% whereas the balances of 91 respondents were female with

the percentage of 40.27%. Concerning the age of the respondents, 51.77% represent 22 to 30 years old, 36.28% represent less than 21 years old and 11.95% represent those above 31 years old.With regards to the qualifications of the respondents, the majority of respondents are bachelor students 44.69%, and 39.38% respondents are master students and 15.93% are doctoral students.

Table 1.Demographic characteristic of respondents

Characteristic	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	135	59.73
	Female	91	40.27
Age	Under 22	82	36.28
	23-30	117	51.77
	Above 31	27	11.95
Education	Bachelorstudents	101	44.69
	Master students	89	39.38
	Ph.D. students	36	15.93

Source: Authors analysis from survey results.

4. EMPIRICAL RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. The descriptive statistics and alpha reliability

Mean and standard deviation are presented in the Appendix. Table 2 shows the variables used in the scale, their number of items, and inter reliability of the scale. A value greater than 0.6 indicates satisfactory internal consistency reliability (Malhotra, 2010). The reliability for the WOM construct was satisfactory with a value of 0.844. The Cronbach Alpha values for environmental awareness were 0.863. For product attitude 0.859, and IPGP 0.828. These values indicate that the scales were reliable and all items should be included in the scale.

Table 2. Results of reliability analysis

Constructs	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
WOM	5	,844
Awareness	4	,863
Attitude	5	,859
Purchase Intention	5	,828

Source: Authors analysis from survey results.

4.2. Correlation between constructs

Table 7 shows that there is a strong relationship between WOM and environmental awareness, a mediator at r=.593 (value of p≤.01**). WOM has also a strong

relationship with ATGP (r=.543, at a value of p≤.01**). WOM has also a strong relationship with the dependent variable i.e. the IPGP (r=.574 at a value of p≤.01**). Environmental awareness has a strong relationship with ATGP (r=.660, at a value of p≤.01**). Awareness has also a strong relationship with IPGP (r=.589 at a value of p≤.01**). Similarly, ATGP has a strong relationship with IPGP (r=.699, p≤.01**).

Table 3. Correlation between constructs

Constructs	Mean	SD	WOM	EA	PA	PI
WOM	3,9796	,59668	1	-	-	-
Awareness	3,9690	,65246	,593**	1	-	-
Attitude	4,0035	,59895	,543**	,660**	1	-
Purchase Intention	4,0496	,55170	,574**	,589**	,699**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.3. Testing of hypotheses

To test our research hypotheses H3, H5, and H6, we conducted a multiple linear regression to evaluate the degree of importance of each variable (Table 4). We note that the global regression model is significant (p= 0,000<0,05).

Table 4. Regression analysis results for intention to purchase green products

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	,962	,192		5,015	,000
Attitude	,449	,057	,487	7,867	,000
WOM	,216	,053	,234	4,049	,000
Awareness	,109	,055	,129	1,991	,048

Dependent Variable: intention to purchase green products.
Independent variables: attitude towards green products, word of mouth, and environmental awareness.
Notes: Model summary: R = 74,2%; R Square = 55,0%; Adjusted R Square = 54,4%; F = 90,579; P = 0.000 (p<0.05).

The relationship between WOM and IPGP is positive (β =, 216; t= 4,049). Hence, H3 is supported. This suggests that consumers who received a positive WOM would have a higher IPGP and vice versa. The relationship between environmental awareness and IPGP is positive (β =, 109; t= 1,991). Hence, H5 is supported. This suggests that the higher the environmental awareness, the higher the IPGP and vice versa. Moreover, the relationship between ATGP and IPGP is positive (β =, 449; t= 7,867). Hence, H6 is supported. This suggests that the higher the positive ATGP, the higher the IPGP and vice versa.

We can conclude that the variables "ATGP", "WOM" and "environmental awareness" positively influence consumer IPGP. These variables determine IPGPs. Based on the SPSS output, the following multiple regression equation was formed:

IPGP = 0,962 + 0,449 (ATGP) + 0,216 (WOM) + 0,109 (Environmental awareness)

The values of the un-standardized Beta coefficient among the independent variables shows that "ATGP" (0.449) is the most important antecedent in affecting the consumer IPGP. In addition, the IPGP is explained 55.0 percent by the combination of the three independent variables (r square=0.550), which includes ATGP, WOM and environmental awareness.

To test our research hypotheses H2 and H4, we conducted a multiple linear regression to evaluate the degree of importance of each variable (Table 9). We note that the global regression model is significant (p= 0,000<0,05).

Table 5. Regression analysis results for ATGPs

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	1,169	,211		5,537	,000
Awareness	,479	,056	,522	8,635	,000
WOM	,234	,061	,233	3,856	,000

Dependent Variable: Attitude towards green products.
Independent variables: WOM and environmental awareness.
Notes: Model summary: R = 68,7%; R Square = 47,1%; Adjusted R Square = 46,7%; F = 99,466; P = 0.000 (p<0.05).

The relationship between WOM and ATGP is positive (β= 0,234; t= 3,856). Hence, H2 is supported. Moreover, the relationship between environmental awareness and ATGP is positive (β=0,479; t=8,635). Hence, H4 is supported. This suggests that the higher the environmental awareness, the higher the positive ATGP and vice versa. We can conclude that the variables "WOM" and "environmental awareness" positively influence ATGP. These variables determine ATGP. The multiple regression equation is written as follows:

ATGP = 1,169 + 0.479 (environmental awareness) + 0,234 (WOM)

The value of the un-standardized Beta coefficient among the independent variables shows that "environmental awareness" (0.479) is the most important antecedent in affecting the ATGP. In addition, the ATGPis explained 47.1 percent by the

combination of the two independent variables (r square=0.471), which includes WOM and environmental awareness.

As for H1, the simple linear regression (Table 6) reveals that the global regression model is significant (P = 0,000 < 0,05). The relationship between "WOM" and "environmental awareness" is positive (β = 0,649; t= 11,027). Then, "WOM" has a positive impact on environmental awareness. Hence, H1 is supported. This suggests that consumers who received a positive WOM would have higher environmental awareness and vice versa.

Table 6. Regression analysis results for environmental awareness

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	1,388	,237		5,863	,000
WOM	,649	,059	,593	11,027	,000

DependentVariable:Environmentalawareness.
Independent variables: WOM.
Notes: Model summary: R = 59,3%; R Square = 35,2 %; Adjusted R Square = 34,9 %; F = 121,592; P = 0.000 (p<0.05).

WOM communications are one of the most important sources of consumers' information about products and services. This study's findings confirmed that WOM, environmental awareness, and ATGP have a positive and significant effect on consumers' IPGP (H3, H5, and H6). The findings of this study were supported by previous studies. For example, Podnar&Javernik, (2012) empirically confirm that WOM affects the consumers' attitudes toward products and purchase probability. Mir, (2011) has found that WOM affects consumers' intentions to buy the non-deceptive counterfeits.

This influence is especially important with green products that are difficult to recognize their advantages and characteristics prior to consumption, such as knowing the health characteristics of green foods or know the advantages of using environmentally friendly cars. This implies that WOM can be used to increase consumers' environmental knowledge, creating positive ATGP, and influence their purchase intention. WOM can also be used to create awareness among the consumers about many environmental issues, such as health risks of air pollution, benefits of green product consumption, and consumers' environmental responsibility. It should be emphasized that the environmental problems have a direct and indirect effect on every

person's life, Therefore, everyone must contribute and help to the preservation and protection of the environment, at least contribute by positive WOM about the environment.

The result indicates that the respondents have a high level of environmental awareness (Overall mean = 3.96). Environmental awareness was also shown to have a positive and significant effect on ATGP (H4), and consumers' IPGP (H5); this could be interpreted as indicating a growing knowledge of environmental issues among consumers in Algeria. This awareness has led consumers' to prefer green products, and this can make them more willing to engage in environmentally friendly behavior. In other words, it shows that those consumers who have a higher environmental awareness would show a more positive ATGP. These results imply that in order to make consumers ATGP, their environmental awareness should be raised. The result was supported by previous studies that proved the influence of environmental awareness on ATGP(Anvar& Venter, 2014). A previous study by Maichum et al., (2017) indicated that environmental consciousness has significant positive influences on IPGP.

Finally, the result indicates that the respondents have positive ATGP (Overall mean = 4.00). Our results show that attitude has a positive and significant impact onIPGP, indicating that hypothesis (H6) is also supported. The acceptance of this hypothesis endorses the fact that if consumers' ATGPare strengthened, their IPGPs would be augmented. This result was supported by previous studies, (e.g., Ahmad &Thyagara, 2015; Anvar& Venter, 2014; Butt, 2017; Maichum et al., 2017; Mohiuddin et al., 2014; Tsen et al., 2006). And reveal that consumers with positive ATGPs would have a higher intention to buy green products, but Wheale& Hinton (2007) refer that there is a gap between attitude and actual behavior.

5. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between WOM, environmental awareness, ATGP, and IPGP. Three main conclusions could be drawn from this study. First, all of the three independent variables, including WOM, environmental awareness, and ATGP, had a significant positive impact on IPGP. Second, WOM communication had a significant positive impact on both environmental

awareness and ATGP. Third, environmental awareness had a significant positive impact on ATGP, and this finding was consistent with some previous studies. According to the results of the study, all hypotheses were supported.Finally, green companies can drive sales and increase market share through creating positive WOM communications about various green issues including green products, raising awareness of environmental issues, and enhancement positive ATGP.

Managerial Implications

The results show that practitioners can increase the IPGPs when they focus on increasing the positive WOM; environmental awareness; and ATGPs among potential consumers. Marketing practitioners should integrate different marketing tools to increase positiveWOM about green, environmental awareness, and ATGPdue to the significant positive effect that such variables have on IPGP. To increase environmental awareness, practitioners should describe the hazardous situation that our environment is facing. On the other hand, the effectiveness of WOM communication that focuses on the benefits of using eco-friendly products and environmental protection could increase positive ATGP. The results show that high levels of environmental awareness and ATGPwill increase the level of IPGP. So, it is of vital importance to focus on improving the environmental knowledge to raise environmental awareness among consumers and ATGP, leading to increased IPGPin the future.Finally, we can say that protecting the environment is everyone's responsibility, media; schools; universities; religious institutions; environmental associations; and academic institutions at all levels. Everyone has a role to play in protecting the environment from damage.

Limitation and directions for future research

This current research has several limitations, thus providing numerous opportunities for further research. Firstly, the sample size in this study is relatively small. Thus, future studies should increase the sample size. Secondly, the sampling method in the current study was utilizing convenient sampling, and this limits the ability to generalize the results of the study. Thus, it is recommended that future research using random sampling so that results can be more generalizable. Thirdly, all of the respondents are students. This means, they can have high levels of general knowledge

about the environment, because most students at the college of the economy can have studied or researched at least one topic about green, such as green economy, green marketing, and green accounting. Thus, it is recommended that future research would be better conducted with other categories of consumers, such as employees or older persons, and then the finding would be more meaningful. Fourthly, this study examined the green purchase intention in general and did not consider specific kinds of products. Thus, we highly recommend future studies to focus on particular products, such as foods, cars, or electrical appliances. Fifthly, this study focuses on intention and did not address actual behavior; therefore it would be more beneficial to study actual behavior to purchase green products to bridge the gap between intention and behavior.Lastly, there may exist other factors that affect IPGP, beyond "WOM", "environmental awareness" and "ATGP". Other potential antecedents should be explored in future studies, such as electronic WOM, perception of environmental degradation risks.

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7. Appendices

Research measurements & Descriptive statistics

No.	Items	Mean	SD
WOM1	I will say positive things about green products.	4,0398	,74429
WOM2	I and my friends often discuss about the green product sets.	3,9602	,75614
WOM3	My friends told me about green product sets.	3,9204	,76177
WOM4	I would encourage friends and relatives to obtain the green products.	4,0133	,77448
WOM5	My friends and relatives usually tell me about the new green products.	3,9646	,76512
EA1	By buying green products, I influence environmental protection.	3,9469	,73443
EA2	I think I have a responsibility to protect the environment.	4,0088	,79438
EA3	I think environmental problems will affect human life.	3,9513	,82318
EA4	I think the environment is getting worse.	3,9690	,74471
AGP1	I prefer using green products over non-green products.	3,9823	,74216
AGP2	I think purchasing green products is good for me.	4,0221	,75686
AGP3	Green products can save energy and electricity and this is important to me.	3,9779	,78568
AGP4	I think green products that can reduce environmental damage are important.	4,0398	,76199
AGP5	I am willing to purchase green products that are good for the environment.	3,9956	,69601
IPGP1	In the future, I will buy green products with less environmental pollution.	4,0752	,75343
IPGP2	I plan to buy green products in the future.	3,9602	,67541
IPGP3	I would recommend my friends to buy and use green products.	4,0310	,72044
IPGP4	I will buy green products in accordance with government advice.	4,0885	,70626
IPGP5	I am very likely to buy green products in the future.	4,0929	,72740