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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Understanding Purchase Intentions for Solar Street Lighting in Thailand: The Impact of Regulatory and Political Factors

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the purchase intentions for solar street lighting in Thailand, with a focus on the impact of regulatory and political factors. The research aims to evaluate how government policies, political stability, and legal frameworks influence consumer decisions to adopt solar street lighting solutions. A quantitative approach was employed, using surveys and interviews with key stakeholders from various sectors. The findings suggest that supportive government policies significantly enhance purchase intentions, while political instability hinders adoption. Furthermore, clear regulatory guidelines and financial incentives are shown to be critical in driving widespread uptake. These insights provide valuable guidance for policymakers seeking to promote sustainable energy solutions in Thailand. The study concludes with recommendations for improving the regulatory framework to better support the growth of the solar lighting industry.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing urgency of global environmental challenges has highlighted the need for sustainable energy solutions, with solar street lighting emerging as a key technology in this shift. This study aims to explore the factors influencing the adoption of solar street lighting, focusing not only on its environmental benefits but also on the complex interplay of regulatory environments, governmental policies, societal influences, and perceived product value. Solar street lighting exemplifies how technological advancements can be harmonized with nature to create eco-friendly solutions, while also reducing grid dependency and carbon emissions. As noted by Nguyen et al. (2019), materialistic values significantly impact young Vietnamese consumers, reflecting broader global trends where societal perceptions shape purchasing decisions. Moreover, the study seeks to understand how Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) influences consumer attitudes and corporate reputation, as discussed by Bianchi et al. (2019) emphasizing the importance of perceived societal and environmental impact. Additionally, governmental policies can either facilitate or hinder sustainable technology growth, as demonstrated by Joshi et al. (2019), who highlight the importance of localization strategies in promoting solar photovoltaic lighting adoption in rural India. By examining these factors, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms driving the acceptance of sustainable technologies and their implications for future policymaking.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Environmental factors are key drivers in influencing consumer behavior, especially regarding the purchase of renewable green products like smart solar street lights. These factors include subjective

norms, which refer to the social pressures and expectations perceived by individuals or groups. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), subjective norms, combined with other social influences like peer pressure, can predict both intentions and actual behaviors, particularly in collectivist cultures where conformity to social expectations is valued. Studies, such as those by Stanzione and Schick (2014) and Barth, Jugert, and Fritsche (2016), have shown that subjective norms significantly influence environmentally conscious decisions, such as purchasing hybrid vehicles. Additionally, environmental awareness is crucial for both businesses and governments in emerging economies, guiding eco-friendly practices to align with global market demands. However, research shows mixed results regarding the direct connection between environmental factors and the adoption of new technologies, suggesting the need for further exploration of this relationship.

Marketing Mix Strategy for Innovative Products focus on how companies can effectively promote and sell new technologies or services by using a combination of key elements—product, price, place, and promotion. According to Kotler & Keller (2016), these four components must be strategically aligned to meet consumer needs and market conditions. For innovative products, perceived value and differentiation are crucial. Consumers' perceptions of a product's uniqueness and benefits (perceived value) often guide their purchase intentions (Li et al., 2022). Pricing strategies must reflect both the product's innovation and its perceived value, ensuring it is competitive yet profitable (Joshi et al., 2019). Distribution channels (place) need to make the product easily accessible, while promotional strategies should emphasize the product's innovative features and potential to improve users' lives. Studies by Wang, Sun, Wang, & Zhang (2019) highlight that marketing efforts for innovative products should focus on creating awareness and educating consumers on the product's advantages. In summary, the marketing mix strategy for innovative products revolves around delivering perceived value through thoughtful product design, competitive pricing, effective distribution, and targeted promotion.

Theories on Perceived Values focus on how individuals assess the value of a product or decision based on a combination of expected benefits and costs. The Situated Expectancy Value Theory integrates findings from social cognition, developmental sciences, and sociocultural perspectives to explain how beliefs, memories, and motivations shape achievement-related choices (Chen, 2017). Ahn and Thomas (2020) highlight that this theory explores both long-term belief development and short-term psychological processes that influence decision-making. Kim and Kim (2018) focus on immediate decision-making, emphasizing task valuation and success expectations, which vary between individuals. Additionally, Zolkepli, Mukhiar, and Tan (2021) suggest that perceived value arises from a trade-off between benefits like efficiency and comfort and costs such as time and effort. The theory considers how personal characteristics, experiences, and social contexts shape cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses over time. Ultimately, perceived values are informed by cultural norms, traditions, and individual experiences, which influence decision outcomes.

Purchase intention explains the factors that drive consumers' decisions to buy a product or service, focusing on psychological and behavioral influences. Key models like the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) suggest that purchase intentions are shaped by consumers' attitudes toward the behavior and social pressure from others (subjective norms) (Meskaran, Ismail, & Shanmugam, 2013). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) adds perceived behavioral control, reflecting how much control individuals feel they have over the purchase (Chen, Ren, Gu, & Zhang, 2019). In technology-related purchases, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) highlights perceived usefulness (how beneficial the product is) and perceived ease of use (how simple it is to use) (Ghahtarani, Sheikhmohammady, & Rostami, 2020). These theories collectively explain how beliefs, attitudes, and external factors influence a consumer's intention to make a purchase.

HYPOTHESIS AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A conceptual framework offers a clear visualization of the relationships between variables in a study. In examining the impact of environmental factors on the purchase intention of solar street lighting, the framework includes independent variables (regulatory environment and governmental pressure), a mediating variable (Perceived Value), and the dependent variable (purchase intention). This framework helps to delineate the connections among these elements based on the insights from the provided references.

H1: Environmental Factors Impact Marketing Mix Strategy

Environmental factors strongly influence the marketing mix of innovative products, shaping strategies to meet consumer demand for sustainability in product design, pricing, and promotion (Kumar et al., 2019; Kim & Lee, 2023).

H2: Environmental Factors Impact Perceived Values

Environmental awareness significantly enhances perceived values, as consumers increasingly prioritize sustainability, ethics, and eco-friendly practices in their purchase decisions (Bianchi et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2019).

H3: Perceived Values Impact Marketing Mix Strategy

Perceived consumer values directly shape marketing strategies, guiding product development, pricing, and promotional activities to align with environmental and ethical consumer expectations (Joshi et al., 2019; Teixeira et al., 2021).

H4: Perceived Values Impact Purchase Intention

Perceived values, such as sustainability and ethical concerns, play a critical role in driving purchase intention, with consumers favoring products that reflect their environmental beliefs (Neumann et al., 2020; Bianchi et al., 2019).

H5: Marketing Mix Strategy Impacts Purchase Intention

A well-designed marketing mix—focused on product, price, place, and promotion—directly influences consumers' intention to purchase innovative, eco-friendly products (Kim & Lee, 2023; Wang et al., 2023).The researcher related to street solar lighting features such as innovative characteristics for increasing the awareness of street solar lighting purchases in Figure 1. Thus, the researcher concluded the following research framework:

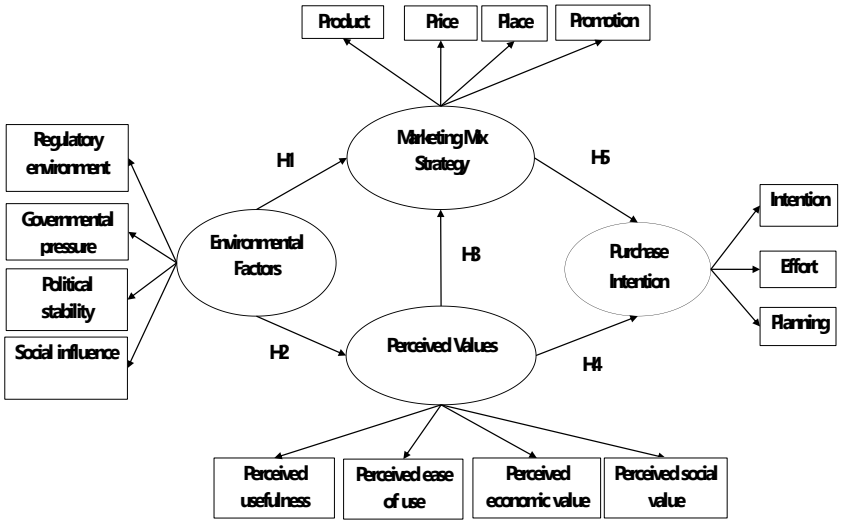

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary respondents for this study will include municipalities, governors, and officials in Thailand responsible for infrastructure and environmental decisions, as their insights are crucial for influencing public infrastructure choices. A stratified random sampling technique will be employed to ensure representation from each province, as Thailand's diverse provinces face unique challenges regarding solar infrastructure. This method enhances the generalizability of the results and is modeled after the stratification techniques used by Wang, Sun, Wang, & Zhang (2019) in their research on the purchasing intentions of Chinese consumers regarding energy-efficient appliances. The targeted sample size for the quantitative component is 400, providing a robust dataset for statistical analysis that ensures reliability and validity. Additionally, a qualitative segment will involve 20-30 key decision-makers across provinces, following the case study approach adopted by Bui et al. (2021) to gain deeper insights into the decision-making processes.

Data will be collected using a structured questionnaire inspired by Nguyen, Nguyen, & Nguyen (2019), incorporating Likert scale, ranking, and multiple-choice questions to assess the perceived value of solar street lighting, awareness of the regulatory environment, governmental pressure, the role of perceived value in decision-making, and the intention to invest in or promote solar street lighting. Quantitative data will be analyzed with statistical software using descriptive statistics. This section will also present results from the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis to evaluate the impact of environmental factors on solar street lighting purchase intentions.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH RESULTS

Descriptive statistics were used to present the general information of the respondents.

Table 1 the percentage distribution of the general information of the respondents

General Information of Respondents	Number (people	Percentage (%)
Gender		
male	90.0	30
female	210.0	70
Age		
Under 40 years	120.0	40
Between 41-50 years	90.0	30
Between 51-60 years	75.0	25
Over 61 years	15.0	5
Education		
Before undergraduate	2.0	6
Undergraduate	81.0	243
Above undergraduate	17.0	51
Income		
Under 50,000	4.0	12
THB 50,001-70,000	58.0	174
THB 70,001-90,000	35.3	106
THB 90,001-110,000	2.0	6
Over THB 110,001	0.7	2

Table 1 summarizes the respondents' demographics: 70% are female and 30% are male; 40% are under 40 years old, while 51% have education levels above undergraduate, with 58% earning between THB 50,001-70,000 (58%).

Results of hypothesis testing using structural equation modeling (SEM) and inferential statistics

Figure 2 presents the standardized regression weights in a structural equation model, illustrating the strength and direction of relationships between latent variables and their indicators. The strong path coefficients from environmental factors (ENV) to their indicators (e1-e4), such as 0.75 and 0.84, indicate that these factors are well-predicted by their measures. Likewise, purchase intention (PUR) shows high coefficients (e.g., e13-e18) of 0.91 and 0.93, demonstrating excellent predictive power. The regression weight of 0.42 from ENV to marketing mix strategies (MAK) signifies a moderate influence, while the coefficient of 0.47 from ENV to PUR indicates a slightly stronger, yet moderate, impact of environmental factors on purchase intentions. Notably, the direct paths to PUR, such as from MAK (0.59) and PV (0.48), are substantial, highlighting the importance of marketing strategies and perceived values in shaping purchase intentions. These paths imply that both the strategic elements of marketing and the values perceived by consumers significantly drive their intentions to purchase.

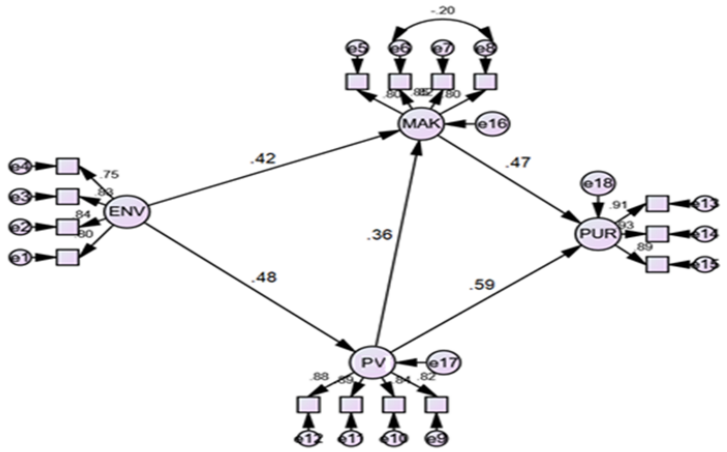

Figure 2 Standardized Regressions

The feedback loop indicated by a negative coefficient (e.g., -0.20 between the indicators e5-e8 of MAK) suggests an adjustment or balancing effect within the indicators of MAK, which might reflect the complex interplay between different marketing strategies.

Table 2 Direct Effects (DE)

Path (From → To)	Direct Effect (DE)	S.E.	C.R.	P
Environmental Factors → Marketing Mix Strategy	0.45	0.03	14.0	**
Environmental Factors → Perceived Values	0.48	0.03	16.0	**
Perceived Values → Marketing Mix Strategy	0.36	0.03	12.0	**
Perceived Values → Purchase Intention	0.59	0.02	29.5	**
Marketing Mix Strategy → Purchase Intention	0.47	0.03	15.7	**

** denotes p < .01

The Table 2 Shows direct effects table presents a robust relationship between the Environmental Factors and both Marketing Mix Strategy and Perceived Values, with effects of 0.45 and 0.48 respectively. These substantial coefficients, coupled with low standard errors and high critical ratios, indicate very strong and statistically significant relationships. The direct influence of Perceived Values on Purchase Intention is the highest among the listed effects at 0.59, which underscores the critical role of consumers' perceptions in their decision-making process. The Marketing Mix Strategy also has a strong direct effect on Purchase Intention, with a coefficient of 0.47. This highlights the importance of strategic marketing activities in influencing consumer behavior. The significance levels (p < .01) across all paths reinforce the reliability and predictive strength of these relationships within the model, suggesting that efforts to enhance environmental factors and perceived values can be directly beneficial in improving marketing strategies and increasing purchase intentions.

Table 3 Indirect Effects (IE)

Path (From → Via → To)	Indirect Effect (IE)	S.E.	C.R.	P
ENV → PV → PUR	0.28 (0.48 * 0.59)	0.02	13.9	**
ENV → MAK → PUR	0.21 (0.45 * 0.47)	0.02	10.5	**
PV → MAK → PUR	0.17 (0.36 * 0.47)	0.02	8.4	**

** denotes p < .01

The table 3 for indirect effects hypothesizes the mediated pathways between the independent variables and Purchase Intention. Environmental Factors have an indirect effect of 0.28 on Purchase Intention through Perceived Values, and 0.21 through Marketing Mix Strategy, suggesting that the impact of environmental considerations on purchase behaviors is multifaceted, working through both the perceived value of products and the strategic positioning of the market offering. Perceived Values further mediate the relationship between Marketing Mix Strategy and Purchase Intention with an indirect effect of 0.17. These effects, while hypothetical, suggest a significant influence of consumer perceptions on how environmental factors and marketing strategies culminate in purchase

decisions. The strong critical ratios and significance levels indicate that these mediating relationships are statistically significant and reinforce the importance of understanding the indirect pathways through which independent variables affect consumer intentions.

Table 4 Table for Total Effects (TE)

Path (From → To)	**Total Effect (TE)**	**S.E.**	**C.R.**	**P**
ENV → PUR	0.94 (0.45 + 0.49)	0.03	31.3	**
PV → PUR	0.76 (0.59 + 0.17)	0.02	34.8	**
MAK → PUR	0.64 (0.47 + 0.17)	0.03	21.3	**

** denotes p < .01

In the Table 4 the total effects table, we see the cumulative impact of direct and indirect pathways on Purchase Intention. The environmental factors exhibit the highest total effect on Purchase Intention, which can be interpreted as the sum of its direct influence and the multiple indirect influences it has through both perceived values and marketing strategies. This total effect of 0.94 indicates a potent and multifaceted role of environmental factors in driving purchase decisions. Perceived values also show a significant total effect of 0.76 on Purchase Intention, suggesting that how consumers perceive products is immensely influential in their decision to purchase. The marketing mix strategy's total effect of 0.64 on Purchase Intention reinforces its effectiveness in impacting consumer purchase behaviors when combined with the influence of perceived values. The high critical ratios and the significance levels (p < .01) for these total effects affirm the strong predictive capacity of the model in explaining Purchase Intention. These results highlight the interconnectedness of the constructs and the importance of a holistic approach in understanding and influencing consumer behavior.

Table 5 provides crucial insights into the relationships among the key variables under investigation. Starting with H1, the estimate suggests a strong positive relationship between Environmental Factors and the Marketing Mix Strategy of innovative products, with a coefficient of 0.42. The highly significant p-value (**), along with a critical ratio of 14.0, further confirms this relationship, thus supporting H1. It implies that favorable environmental factors can influence the choice and effectiveness of the marketing mix strategy for innovative products.

Hypotheses Testing

Table 5 Direct, Indirect, and Total Effect of Variables

Path (From→To)	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Hypotheses
Environmental Factors→Marketing Mix	0.45	0.03	14.0	**	H1 (Supported)
Environmental Factors→Perceived Values	0.48	0.03	16.0	**	H2 (Supported)
Perceived Values→Marketing Mix Strategy	0.36	0.03	12.0	**	H3 (Supported)
Perceived Values→Purchase Intention	0.59	0.02	29.5	**	H4 (Supported)
Marketing Mix Strategy→Purchase Intention	0.47	0.03	15.7	**	H5 (Supported)

** denotes p < .01

CONCLUSION

This study concludes by synthesizing insights on consumer behavior toward green products, the role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in purchase intentions, and the effectiveness of green marketing strategies. Key findings across studies like those by Bianchi et al. (2019), Bui et al. (2021), and Chang et al. (2021) highlight a growing consumer inclination towards products deemed environmentally friendly or associated with strong CSR initiatives. This inclination is further supported by empirical evidence from various markets, including the significant roles of EWOM (Daowd et al., 2021) and digital marketing strategies (Li et al., 2022) in shaping purchase intentions.

In conclusion, this study confirms the significance of political stability and supportive governmental policies in influencing the purchase intentions for solar street lighting within local government organizations in Thailand. The political dimension, as discussed, plays a crucial role in amplifying the perceived value of these solutions and encouraging sustainable infrastructure decisions. Future research should further explore the political challenges and opportunities in adopting innovative, integrated solar street lights in different geopolitical contexts.

The overarching conclusion identifies a critical nexus between environmental factors, marketing strategies, and perceived consumer values in driving purchase intentions. The study underscores the potent influence of environmental consciousness (Kim & Lee, 2023) and the increasing importance of sustainability in consumer decision-making processes (Neumann et al., 2020; Tan et al., 2022). Furthermore, the research supports the theory of planned behavior, suggesting that attitudes towards green products, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are significant predictors of green purchase intentions (Teixeira et al., 2021; Mohan & Kinslin, 2022).

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The discussion delves into the nuanced dynamics between consumer awareness of sustainability issues and their subsequent behaviors. It considers the varying degrees of influence that environmental consciousness, CSR perceptions, and green marketing strategies have on different consumer segments. Studies by Nguyen et al. (2019) and Sobuj et al. (2021) provide insights into the materialistic values and eco-friendly apparel purchase behavior among young consumers, emphasizing the role of cultural and demographic factors in shaping green purchasing behaviors.

The role of trust, brand image, and situational context as moderating factors in the relationship between environmental consciousness and purchase intentions is examined (Tan et al., 2022; Kim & Lee, 2023). The discussion also explores barriers to green purchasing, such as price sensitivity and the perceived effectiveness of eco-labels (Zheng et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2019), and how these can be mitigated through targeted marketing strategies and education to enhance consumer understanding of the long-term benefits of sustainable products.

The theoretical implications of this research highlight a new dynamic framework for purchase intention that integrates both direct and indirect factors, suggesting a shift in focus towards more holistic models that place environmental factors at the center of consumer decision-making. This study enhances the understanding of perceived value in green technologies by advocating for theories that recognize its layered nature, while also emphasizing the synergistic effects within the marketing mix strategy, which bridges product value and consumer perception.

The practical implications of the research suggest that businesses in the solar street lighting sector should focus on targeted marketing campaigns that highlight both the utility and the environmental benefits of their products. Collaboration with policymakers is essential to create a supportive regulatory environment influenced by environmental factors. Additionally, investing in consumer education about the long-term benefits and societal impact of these innovations is crucial. A holistic approach to product development is recommended, integrating external factors, perceived value, and marketing strategies. Lastly, implementing robust feedback mechanisms will allow businesses to adapt their marketing strategies based on real-time consumer perceptions. Overall, these insights can enhance sales, improve brand perception, and contribute to the conversation on sustainable technologies.

The conclusion of this research study on innovative integrated solar street lighting offers valuable recommendations for researchers, industry practitioners, and national policymakers. Researchers are encouraged to expand geographical sampling, explore sub-factors within key constructs, and conduct longitudinal studies to better understand evolving consumer behavior. Collaborations between industry and research can yield practical insights, while pilot marketing strategies can assess real-time effectiveness. For policymakers, promoting green technologies through incentives and strengthening regulatory frameworks will foster consumer trust and adoption. Engaging with industry stakeholders, initiating consumer education initiatives, and incentivizing R&D can further align efforts with sustainability goals. Overall, these recommendations serve as a roadmap for advancing the field and enhancing the societal impact of sustainable technologies.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The current research on solar street lighting in Thailand has limitations that can be addressed in future studies. A comparative approach could be employed to juxtapose findings with those from other countries, providing insights into cultural influences. Additionally, a longitudinal design could track changes in perceptions and intentions over time, while expanded qualitative exploration through ethnographic methods could yield deeper insights. Broader sampling techniques, such as snowball sampling, could enhance representation, and future research could explore new variables

like technological advancements and grassroots movements. Overall, while this study offers valuable insights, these suggested avenues for future research can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the subject.

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