Green Product and Sustainable Tourism Development: The Role of Green Buying Behavior

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Abstract

This paper aims to test the direct impact of tourists' perceptions about green products with its three dimensions: green brand positioning, consumers' attitude toward green brands, and green brand knowledge on sustainable tourism development (STD) and the indirect impact through green buying behavior. A questionnaire was employed to collect the data from tourists (n=615). A two-steps approach with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to evaluate the measurement and the structural models. The results showed that all the direct path coefficients from green product to green buying behavior and STD are positive and significant. Furthermore, the results also displayed that green buying behavior partially mediated the relationship between green product dimensions and STD. The values of the three direct path coefficients from green product dimensions (green brand positioning, consumers' attitude toward green brands, and green brand knowledge) and green buying behavior, are almost twice the values of the three direct path coefficients from green product dimensions and STD, which further shows the vital moderation effect of green buying behavior in the relationship between green product and STD. Research implications, limitations, and further research opportunities are also considered.

Keywords: Green product; Sustainable tourism development, Green buying behavior; structural equation modeling (SEM).

Introduction

Environmentalism has influenced consumers' buying behavior and sustainability over the past two decades (Dagher & Itani, 2014; Dangi et al., 2020; Han etal.,2009; Kalafatis et al., 1999). The increased awareness of environmental problems motivates consumers to purchase environmentally friendly products and services (Kilbourne etal.,2009; Laroche et al.,2001) for the good of future generations. The term "green products" is defined as "products that will not pollute the earth or deplore natural resources, and [that] can be recycled or conserved" (Shamdasani et al.,1993). Consumers are gradually adopting to buying green products (Laroche et al., 2001). Pertinacity, customers are becoming aware of their buying attitude, which is shaped according to several

environmental problems (Laroche et al., 2001) such as carbon emissions and resource waste generated by tourist enterprises (Wang et al., 2019). Consumers have directed their increasing concern for environmental issues into a desire for environmentally friendly products/services, and the trend of "going-green" has grown internationally as people become more conscious of the value of living a healthy lifestyle. (Soyez, 2012; Thøgersen et al., 2009). Therefore, tourist enterprises have become active in adopting green and eco-labels agendas to increase their market share (Erdogan & Baris, 2007).

Green product development, on the other hand, should not be perceived as an unnecessary extra cost for enterprises, but rather as an opportunity to boost sustainable competitive advantage in a win-win situation. (Porter and van der Linde, 1995). Previous studies have shown many of the benefits that can be derived from "going green" in business operations: improved effectiveness and efficiency of resources usage, maximize return on investment, improve human resource management practices, improved sales, enhance organization image, differentiation, and business sustainability (Berry and Rondinelli, 1998; Elshaer et al., 2021;

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Engleberg, 1992; Fierman, 1991; Henriques and Sadorsky, 1999; Kolk, 2000; Peattie, 1992; Miles and Munilla, 1993; Shrivastava, 1995; Sobaih et al., 2020)

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It was noted that while comprehensive research on the green product had been undertaken in Western countries, only a limited amount of research on green product, green buying behavior, and STD had been conducted in developing countries (Hartmann and Ibanez, 2006; Juwaheer et al., 2012; Konuk, 2015; and Yadav and Pathak, 2016), including Egypt. Joshi and Rahman (2015) suggested that more studies should be carried out in developing countries to validate the impact of green product on green buying behavior. The current study went further and investigated the mediating effect of green buying behavior in the relationship between green product (green brand positioning, consumers' attitude toward green brands, green brand knowledge) and STD. To the authors' knowledge, this is the first study that investigates the mediating effect of green buying behavior on the relationship between green products and STD. The empirical findings of this study, including the test of the moderating effects, would fill the gap in the existing body of knowledge regarding the influence of green product dimensions on green product buying behavior and STD. Also, the research will include new insights on previous results. The proposed model could assist marketers in identifying particular factors that have a major effect on green product purchasing behavior and STD.

Literature Review
Green Products

There are many definitions in the literature to explain the meaning of green product or green brand, Mebratu (2001) defined it as the inclusion of environmental considerations in a consumer's daily purchasing decisions, while Magerholm (2003) focused in his definition on environmental efficiency, then Pujari, et al (2003) added a deeper dimension, stressing that a green product is a product that is produced by integrating environmental considerations into product engineering design procedures, which has been called design for the environment. Then Wei and Kwazi (2005) gave us a new perspective, which is

the environmentally friendly product, that can be done through two main activities, namely minimizing waste and maximizing resource efficiency. In the same context, Kleindorfer et al (2005) highlighted in their introduction to the green product on the concept and principles of sustainable operations management that allow companies to achieve competitive returns and profits without compromising the rights of others and the surrounding environment, which can be achieved through environmentally sound production processes, responsible uses of the product, and proper disposal of the product (Hartmann and Apaolaza Ibanez, 2006), hence the importance of using strategies to reduce environmental impact (D'Souza, et al., 2007), and reliance on environmental innovations, such as institutional, organizational, technical and social changes that lead to improving environmental quality and achieving sustainable development (Triebswetter and Wackerbauer, 2008).

Many studies are dealing with green product and green brand issues, including what deals with how consumers perceive and evaluate brands (Keller, 1993), Patrick et al. (2005) studied the effect of Green Brand Positioning on the attitude towards the brand, and a research by Rios et al (2006) explained how the attachment to the environment positively affects the brand position. Huang et al (2014) also added two new concepts to the green brand literature which are Green Brand Knowledge and Attitude towards Green Brand and proposed a comprehensive model to test the relationship among the three variables of green product dimensions and green purchase intention. also, Suki (2016) used the variables that used before by Huang et al and examined the impact of these variables on purchase intention with focus on organic food. To build the framework of this research, the variables approved by Huang et al (2014) and Suki (2016) were adopted in this study with a focus on the tourism industry, and examine the direct impact of tourists' perceptions about green product three dimensions on sustainable tourism development and the indirect impact through green buying behavior.

Green Products Dimensions
Green Brand Positioning:

According to Aulinaand Yuliati (2017), green brand positioning can be used as an instrument in achieving a tourism enterprise's competitive advantage. Keller (1998) defined brand positioning as the value of green products or activities that enable companies to attract customer attention by

revising information to form their preferred brand image and the reason for choosing a particular green product. Gwin and Gwin (2003), and Chin et al. (2019) support that "the goal of positioning is to generate a competitive advantage in the mind of consumers over other competitor brands based on tangible or intangible product attributes". As a result, green brand positioning consists of a functional positioning that points the roles of brand features as an intermediary to deliver ecological values to consumers (Hartmann and Ibanez, 2006). Therefore, customers with some environmental knowledge and previous optimistic experience in green product purchases have a greater tendency to show more intentions to purchase this product due to its salient features and brand positioning (Lin and Chang, 2012; Norazah, 2013). A study of OECD (2012) highlights the importance of communication to enhance the green business model innovation in tourism, Suki (2016) supports that green brand positioning, through active communication campaigns related to the green trait, can create a more positive perception of green brands among consumers. Some researchers affirmed that green branding has a significant impact on green product purchasing intent and the industry's sustainability (Chin et al., 2019; Mostafa, 2009; Huang et al., 2014; Suki 2016). According to what was mentioned earlier, the first hypothesis of the study can be formulated as follows:

H1: Green brand positioning has a positive direct impact on green buying behavior.

Green Brand Knowledge

Keller (1993) defined Green brand knowledge as everything that is evident in the consumer's memory and related to the green brand and its obligations and concerns towards the environment. As a result, a positive attitude has appeared regarding how companies and tourism destinations deliver environmental knowledge to the customers. Many studies reported and highlighted the importance of this positive impact of knowledge on consumers' intention with green products and sustainability, such as Chen and Chang (2012); Chin et al., 2019; and Ihsan et. al, 2019. Keller (2003) identified brand awareness and image as key dimensions of brand knowledge and these dimensions were classified according to the types of information provided to the consumer. Therefore, lack of knowledge regarding green products has a negative impact on consumers' purchase intention (Connel, 2010). Customers with a high standard of green product brand knowledge have greater purchase intention and attitude (Chin

et al., 2019; Ihsan et. al, 2019; and Suki, 2016). According to what was mentioned earlier, the second hypothesis of the study can be formulated as follows:

H2: Green Brand Knowledge has a positive direct impact on green buying behavior.

Attitude toward green brands

Attitude of customers towards green brand is related to their predilection and valuation of green product brand (Solomon, 2014). Likewise, Lim et al. (2016) demonstrated that food safety behavior has had an impact on consumer behavior. Honkanen and Young (2015) pointed out that the attitude of consumers when buying sustainable products was the most important factor in predicting their motivation to buy sustainable products, as well as the influence of relatives such as family. Some studies highlight that green consumers base their purchasing decision on the background of their environmental attitudes (Gupta and Ogden, 2009; Felix and Braunsberger, 2016; and Ying-Kai, et al. 2020). A positive image is an essential effect that green product buyers' attitude and influence their intent to buy green products (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2014; Thøgersen et al., 2009; Zhang & Dong 2020). Similarly, the customers who have optimistic attitudes toward green products are exceedingly suitable to develop a stronger tendency to buy green products that are dependent on green branding position and image (Mostafa, 2009). Teng (2009) and Chin et al. (2019) support this and he stated that customers who have affirmative attitude to a specific brand, they head for having higher purchase intent levels. According to what was mentioned earlier, the third hypothesis of the study can be formulated as follows:

H3: Attitude toward green brand has a positive direct impact on green buying behavior.

Green Buying Behavior

Green buying behavior is a quite complex term, which is evidenced by the great contradiction between researchers in describing and identifying the factors affecting it, and its relationship, whether negative or positive, with other variables, this complexity has been highlighted by Liobikiene and Bernatoniene (2017) and Chaudhary and Bisai (2018). In the same context of contradiction, Chan (2001) has asserted that consumers with environmental concerns and an environmentally friendly intent to buy do not influence their ultimate buying behavior. While other researchers such as Schuhwerk and Lefkokk (1995); Akehurst et al. (2012); and Liao et al. (2020) affirmed the

existence of a correlation between purchase intentions and buying behavior of green products.

Kumar & Ghodeswar (2015) described the green buying behavior of customers as the process of green consumers buying environmentally friendly products from green companies, moreover, they will continue to buy this type of product in the future. Also, green customers concentrate while buying green products on the product's specifications, as they tend to buy organic products with biodegradable packaging, which are environmentally friendly (Jain & Kaur, 2006), this description matches what has been mentioned by Hartmann and Ibanez (2006) to define green brand positioning and its value to consumers, which format the first hypothesis "H1" with focus on the tourism industry as mentioned earlier. Laroche et al. (2001) added that among the green buying behavior is searching for information about the green product and striving to build green knowledge. This is in line with what was affirmed by Connel (2010); Chen and Chang (2012); and Suki (2016) about the importance of knowledge as one of the three dimensions of the green products, and its positive impact on consumer behavior and his/her purchase intention, when the consumer has a high level of brand knowledge. This relationship has been studied in this study with a focus on the tourism industry, as mentioned earlier in the second hypothesis "H2", to study the direct relationship between the green brand knowledge and green buying behavior from the tourists' point of view.

As for Barber, et al. (2009); and Ihsan et. al (2019), they went further in explaining the green buying behavior, and emphasized that the green consumer will share his/her information, knowledge, and image about the green product with relatives and friends before the purchase or re-purchases, which is consistent with Honkanen and Young (2015), who affirmed the influence of relatives on the attitude towards brands and customer buying behavior, and with what mentioned by Suki (2016), that customers with a high level of green products brand knowledge have greater purchase intention and attitude. It is the relationship that was also studied with a focus on the tourism industry, as mentioned in the third hypothesis "H3" that provides for studying the direct relationship between the attitude towards green brands and green buying behavior as perceived by tourists.

Sustainable Tourism Development

Since the 1992 Earth Summit, there has been an increase in consumer interest towards the environment, and all factors related to it, which was followed by increasing interest from governments and the private sector in sustainable development issues. Achieving sustainable development in various sectors has become the most important goal of many governments and private sector companies (Lubin and Esty, 2010; Raska and Shaw, 2012; and Amerta et al. 2018). Paço et al., (2013), and Ihsan et. al (2019) argued that Green customer's buying behavior is linked with sustainable and environmentally friendly purchasing, which contributes to sustainable development that leads to the well-being of society, and preservation of the planet. On the other hand, Moisander (2007) doubted the clarity of the relationship between the consumer's buying behavior and his/her thoughts and motives towards sustainability, and that it is not possible to permanently link between consumers' purchasing decisions and their attitudes towards the environment and the sustainability of life. Quite the contrary, Cherian and Jacob (2012) believe, that people interested in green life and sustainability do exist, and they are very important to governments and companies because they serve by example to other consumers the sustainability of this planet, and they represent a driving force in the path of sustainable development. Also, Green buying behavior and green consumption are two of the basic pillars of achieving sustainable development, as it involves behaviors and activities that do not cause harm to the environment, buying and consuming responsibly and consciously towards society, and more than that, it ensures the sustainability of resources for future generations (He et al., 2016; Tripathi and Singh, 2016; and Amerta et al. 2018).

In the same context, UNWTO (2020) defined sustainable tourism as the type of tourism that takes into account the current and future needs of all tourism beneficiaries, with regard to the social, economic, and environmental impacts. Moreover, UNWTO (2013) identified who are the tourism beneficiaries, and what is their role in implementing sustainable tourism development, in a related context, it emphasized that some stakeholders may cause negative impacts or inhibit the sustainability of the tourism industry, whether intentionally or unintentionally, through failure to perform their roles or misappropriating these roles. For example, governments may not play an effective role in planning the tourism industry and managing its various activities, which leads to the disruption of efforts to achieve sustainable tourism

development. Although many researchers have dealt with sustainable tourism issues from multiple aspects, for the most part, these researches focused on limited issues, in the same line with this view, Sidali et al (2017) argued that several studies are limited to the sustainability of tourism from an environmental perspective, or the perspective of the host community and its impact on the sustainability of tourism, and what is noticeable, is the shortcoming in studying other aspects such as spending by tourists to buy sustainable holidays, the impact of social and demographic factors on tourists 'choices and purchasing decisions for sustainable holidays, and the tourist's perspective in general toward sustainable tourism development in the destinations they visit and their role in achieving sustainability.

According to what was mentioned above, in this study the relationship between the three variables expressing the green product (green brand positioning, consumers' attitude toward green brands, green brand knowledge) and their impact on sustainable tourism development will be examined, as well as the direct relationship between green buying behavior and sustainable tourism development from tourists' point of view, which are the relationships that can be formulated in the following hypotheses:

H4. Green brand positioning has a positive direct impact on sustainable tourism development.
H5. Green Brand Knowledge has a positive direct impact on sustainable tourism development.
H6. Attitude toward green brand has a positive direct impact on sustainable tourism development.
H7. Green Buying Behavior has a positive direct impact on sustainable tourism development.

Research methodology
Operationalization of the study construct and instrument development.

A quantitative research approach was employed using a survey research strategy with a self-administered questionnaire as the main data collection method. All variables of the current study were operationalized employing a multiple-item scale derived from an extensive literature review to find reliable and widely used measures. All variables were measured using the regular five-point Likert scale. Green product was measured by three dimensions captured from Suki (2016). The first dimension describes the green brand positions (i.e. "green products have matched my wants and needs"; " I prefer to purchase environmentally green products". The second dimension measures the attitude toward green brands sample items

include, " I feel that green product's environmental claims are generally trustworthy; " I feel that green product's environmental performance is generally dependable". The third dimension focuses on green brand knowledge (i.e., " Going green products could be a beneficial investment in the long term "; " I purchase a green product because it has more environmental benefit than other products ". Green buying behavior was measured by three items adapted from Aaker, (2007) and Patrick et al. (2005) the items focus on the green purchase intention of the customer, sample items include " I intend to buy a green product because of the environmental concern"; and " Overall, I am glad to purchase a green product because it is environmentally friendly". Finally, sustainable tourism development from a tourist perspective was operationalized by 5- reflective items captured from Sidali, Huber, & Schamel (2017) as shown in table 1.

The study questionnaire was designed to contain 5 main sections, the first section asks about some demographic elements, the second one cover the sustainable tourism development items, the third one asks about the green purchase intention, and finally, the six-section covers the three dimensions of green product. The questionnaire was translated from its original English version to Arabic, and then back-translation by an English-Arabic expert to validate it. The instrument was pre-tested with six academics and, six professionals in tourism industry. All were asked to evaluate the instrument items for content validity and give any feedback. The respondents'' observations were then used to revise the instrument and purify it.

Sample and data collection

This study targeted tourists that were departed Egypt from two main airports: Hurghada and Sharm El Sheikh. These two cities attract a lot of visitors all yearlong and were categorized as the world's lowest-cost luxurious tourist destinations (Skyscanner, 2018). 700 self-administrated questionnaires were dropped and then collected using a simple random sample method (Ibeh & Brock, 2004). Data was collected from visitors during July and August 2020. A total of 615 respondents filled the questionnaires with no missing data and with a response rate of 87%.

A t-test was conducted to detect if early-respondents (July 2020) and late-respondents (August 2020) mean scores were different. The results revealed no statistically significant differences which give a signal that non-response bias is not a problem in our study (Armstrong and

Overton, 1997)

Tourists were asked to fill all the sections (dependent and independent variables) in the self-administered questionnaire. Therefore, this study is concerned to test the common method variance (CMV). Podsakoff, et al., (2012) provide several procedures to deal with CMV. First, tourists were assured that the responses would be kept anonymous and confidential. Second, the instrument was structured where dependent questions are placed before the independent questions (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977). Lastly, Harman's single factor method was carried out to assess CMV, where all measures are exposed to EFA in SPSS, and the factors to extract are fixed to1 with unrotated factor solution. As a result, one factor was extracted to describe 33 % of the variance. Taken all together, these procedures indicate that there is no problem with CMV.

The 615 valid responses were from 400 females (65 %) and 215 males (35 %). The majority were aged between 26–39 years old (70%), with a bachelor's level degree (60%). Most visitors were unmarried (65%) and over half (55%) had previously visited Egypt. The majority (70%) of the visitors stayed between seven- and nine nights in five-star hotels.

The mean variable scores are ranged from3.72to 4.25, the standard deviation (S.D) scores are ranged from .780 to 1.166 (see table 1) suggesting that the data are more widespread and less clustered around the mean value (Bryman and Cramer, 2012).

Data analysis and findings

Using Amos v. 18 graphics and Maximum Likelihood Estimation methods, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed as the main data analysis technique in this study. A two-steps approach was carried out following Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) suggestions. In the first phase, first-order confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to evaluate the measurement model's reliability, convergent, and discriminant validity before assessing the hypothesized structural model in the second phase. Several fit indices were captured from Hair et l., (2018); Byrne (2011), and Kline (2011) to determine the level of model fit to data as shown in Table 1.

Measurement model findings

CFA was carried out to scrutinize the latent unobserved constructs' reliability and validly. As illustrated in table 1 and figure 2, the output of the CFA model shows a good model fit: χ^2 (220, N=615)

= 734.76.58, p < 0.001, normed χ^2 = 3.339, RMSEA = 0.047, SRMR=.035, CFI = 0.938, TLI = 0.919, NFI = 0.932, PCFI = 0.703 and PNFI = 0.701 (see table 1).

All latent constructs Cronbach's alphas (*a*) values and composite reliability (CR) scores (as shown in table 1) are tolerable and surpass the recommended threshold of 0.80 (Hair et al., 2018; Fornell & Larcker, 1981), therefore reflected good internal reliability. The standardized factors' loadings ranged from 0.84to 0.98, which exceed the preferable score of 0.7 with t-values more than 26.28 (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988), (see table 1). These findings ensure a positive and significant relationship between the variables that were theoretically established to operationalize the study dimensions (see Figure 2). Convergent validity is thus achieved. For all dimensions, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values (as shown in table 1) are above the recommended 0.50 value (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), further confirmed the convergent validity of the study constructs. The values of Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) did not exceed the corresponding AVE values, ensuring that the study constructs obviously differ from each other (Hair et al., 2018), accordingly discriminant validity was supported (see table 1).
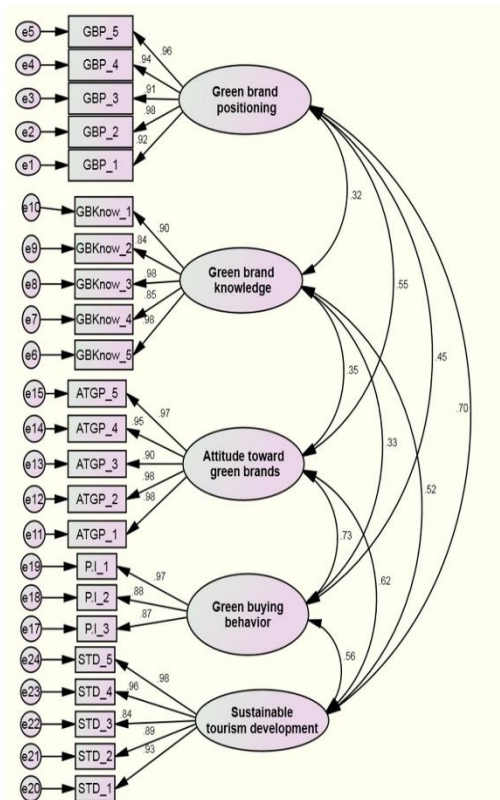

Figure 2. **First order CFA model**
"Note: all Factors loadings and correlations are significant at P< .001"

Table 1. **Factor Loadings, T-values, M, S.D and dimensions' properties**

Factors and items	loading	T- value	M	S. D	Properties
Green brand positioning (Suki, 2016), (a=.97)					CR= .974; AVE=.883; MSV= .484
Quality and price are important when purchasing green products	.920	F	3.78	1.166	
I get to know about green branding through advertisement	.975	50.577	3.89	1.025	
Green products have matched my wants and needs	.907	38.821	3.95	1.031	
Green product always overpriced	.937	43.285	3.87	1.068	
I prefer to purchase environmentally green products	.958	47.000	3.87	1.058	
Attitude toward green brands (Suki, 2016), (a=.96)					CR= .981; AVE=.913; MSV= .533
I feel that green product's environmental reputation is generally reliable	.983	F	4.00	1.002	
I feel that green product's environmental performance is generally dependable	.976	83.795	3.98	1.017	
I feel that green product's environmental claims are generally trustworthy	.904	48.192	3.96	1.045	
Green product's environmental concern meets my expectations	.946	62.863	3.98	1.017	
Green products keep promises and responsibilities for environmental protection	.966	74.663	3.97	1.020	
Green brand knowledge (Suki, 2016) (a=.96)					CR= .960; AVE=.829; MSV= .268
Going green products could be a beneficial investment in the long term	.90	F	4.24	.827	
Green product's environmental performance meets my expectations	.83	36.567	4.18	.918	
Lack of availability of access is a major reason for the low popularity and demand for green products	.98	77.917	4.25	.780	
I purchase a green product because it has more environmental benefit than other products	.84	35.650	4.18	.936	
I purchase a green product because it has more environmental benefit than other products	.97	46.073	4.25	.783	
Green buying behavior (Aaker, 2007; Patrick et al., 2005) (a=.93)					CR= .933; AVE=.823; MSV= .533
I intend to buy a green product because of the environmental concern	.96	F	4.06	.868	
I expect to purchase green product in the future because of their environmental benefits	.88	37.670	4.00	.943	
Overall, I am glad to purchase a green product because it is environmentally friendly	.87	36.269	4.00	.946	
Sustainable tourism development (Sidali, Huber, and Schamel, 2017), (a=.96)					CR= .966; AVE=.849; MSV= .484
I experience nature in an intense and profound way	.93	F	3.80	.920	
I regularly care about the origin and sustainability of products bought during my holiday	.88	37.625	3.84	.972	
I grapple with the culture of the host country and adapt myself to new environments	.83	32.268	3.91	.855	
I frequently choose a sustainable and eco-friendly product	.96	50.730	3.69	1.071	
I usually use public products that do not harm the environment	.97	53.730	3.72	1.045	

Several fit indices were captured from Hair et l., (2018) ; Byrne (2011), and Kline (2011) to determine the level of model fit to data: 1) χ2 (insignificant p-value isadvantageous), 2) normed χ2 (value below 0.05 is satisfactory), 3) RMSEA "root mean square error of approximation", 4) SRMR "standardized root mean error residual": values below 0.05 are acceptable), 5) CFI "comparative fit index", 6) TLI "Tucker Lewis Index", 7) NFI "Normed Fit Index": values more than 0.90 are satisfactory, 8) PCFI "Parsimony Comparative Fit Index" 9) PNFI "Parsimony Normed Fit Index": values more than 0.50 are favorable.

Model fit: (χ2 (220, *N*=615) = 734.76.58, p <0.001, normed χ2 =3.339, RMSEA = 0.047, SRMR=.035, CFI = 0.938, TLI = 0.919, NFI = 0.932, PCFI = 0.703 and PNFI = 0.701)

Note: CR=composite reliability, AVE=average variance extracted, MSV= Maximum shared value. F. Fixed to set the scales.

Structural model findings

The structural model as shown in figure 2 was then tested by running SEM using Amos v.18

graphics to identify the direction and nature of the relationships between the research hypotheses.

Overall, the Goodness-of-fit (GoF) indexes proposed a good model fit: χ2 (223, N=615) = 915.415, p < 0.001, normed χ2 = 4.105, RMSEA =

0.048, SRMR=.046, CFI = 0.921, TLI = 0.938, NFI = 0.922, PCFI = 0.847 and PNFI = 0.771. (see table 2). Additionally, the structural model produced a good explanatory power of the exogenous variables on the endogenous variables as the squared multiple correlations (SMC) are 0.47 for green buying behavior and, 0.43 for STD.
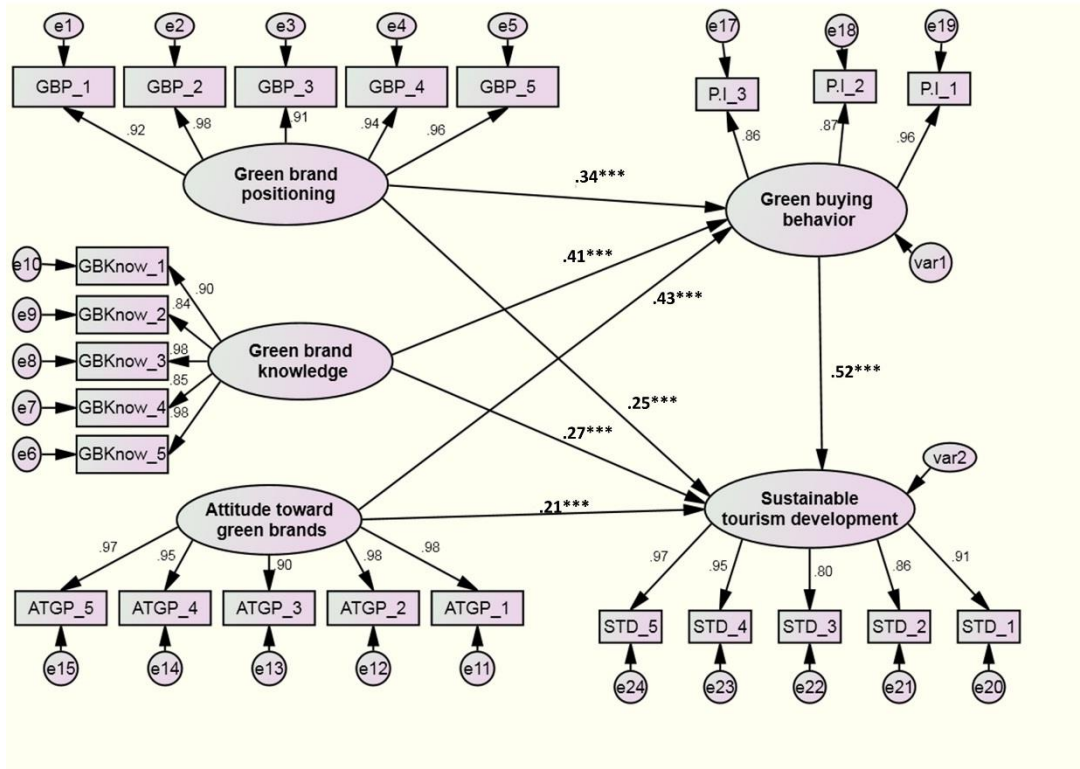

Figure 3. **The Structural Model**

Table 2. **Result of the structural model.**

Hypotheses	Research model Beta (β)	C-R (T-value)	SMC	Hypotheses results
H1 Green Brand Positioning ⟶ Green buying behavior	.34***	11.032	----	Supported
H2 Green Brand knowledge ⟶ Green buying behavior	.41***	9.882	----	Supported
H3 Attitude towards green brand ⟶ Green buying behavior	.43***	11.798	----	Supported
H4 Green Brand Positioning ⟶ Sustainable tourism development	.25***	7.266	----	Supported
H5 Green Brand knowledge ⟶ Sustainable tourism development	.27***	8.148	----	Supported
H6 Attitude towards green brand ⟶ Sustainable tourism development	.21***	7.411	----	Supported
H7 Green buying behavior ⟶ Sustainable tourism development	.52***	12.665		
Green buying behavior	-----------	-----------	0.47	------------
Sustainable tourism development	-----------	-----------	0.43	------------

"Model fit (χ2 (223, N=615) = 915.415, p < 0.001, normed χ2 = 4.105, RMSEA = 0.048, SRMR=.046, CFI = 0.921, TLI = 0.938, NFI = 0.922, PCFI = 0.847 and PNFI = 0.771)".
"Beta (β): effect size; C-R(T-value): critical ratio; SMC: squared multiple correlation; ***: P>0.001"

Table 2 and figure 3 displays the direct impact of green product dimensions (green brand positioning, green brand knowledge, and attitude towards green brand) on the green buying behavior and STD. The SEM standardized regression wights shows that green product

positioning (β = 0.34, t-value= 9.882, p < 0.001), green brand knowledge (β = 0.41, t-value= 15.387, p < 0.001), and attitude towards green brand, (β = 0.43, t-value= 11.978, p < 0.001) are directly and significantly impacts green buying behavior, thus supporting for hypotheses H1 , H2 and H3.Similarly, green product positioning (β = 0.25, t-value= 7.266, p < 0.001), green brand knowledge (β = 0.27, t-value= 8.148, p < 0.001), and attitude towards green brand, (β = 0.21, t-value= 7.411, p < 0.001) are directly and significantly impacts STD. Thus, supporting for hypotheses H4, H5 and H6. Moreover, green buying behavior was found to have a direct and positive impact on STD (β = 0.52, t-value= 12.665, p < 0.001), hypothesis H7 thus was supported.

The results also displayed that green buying behavior partially mediated the relationship between green product dimensions (green brand positioning, green brand knowledge, and attitude toward green brands) and STDs all the direct and indirect paths were positive and significant (Zhao, Lynch, and Chen 2010).

Discussion

This study aims to examine the impact of green products with its three dimensions "Green Brand Positioning, Attitude towards Green Brand, Green Brand Knowledge", on green buying behavior, and sustainable tourism development in Egypt from the perspective of tourists. This study offers a significant contribution to tourism literature, marketers, policymakers, and stakeholders in Egypt.

Results show that the green brand positioning positively and significantly impact the green buying behavior of tourists in Egypt, which supports the first hypothesis H1, this result is consistent with what was mentioned by Lin and Chang, 2012; Norazah, 2013; Huang et al; Suki 2016; and Chin et al. 2019 who affirmed that green brand positioning is an important factor that customers are considering when they are selecting a green product, which seems logical with the Egyptian case, as it is noticeable in the last few years that governmental and private sector tourism entities that have adopted the green brand on their products, such as protectorates (EEAA, 2021, and green star hotel program (Egyptian Hotel Association, 2021), they have achieved high rates of increase in annual sales, which had a great positive impact also on profits, and high levels of confidence in these entities from all parties working in the tourism industry inside and outside Egypt.

The results of SEM also show that green brand

knowledge while buying a green product in Egypt is positively and significantly impact the Green Buying Behavior, which supports the second hypothesis H2. This result supported by Mostafa, 2009; Connel, 2010; Chen and Chang, 2012; Suki 2016; Chin et al. 2019; and Ihsan et. al, 2019, who mentioned that lack of knowledge regarding green products has a negative impact on purchase intention and buying Behavior, and customers with a high level of green products brand knowledge have greater purchase intention and attitude. Meanwhile, this result fully describes what happens in Egypt during the purchase of green brands, or even associated with them, as tourists mentioned while conducting the questionnaire with them in this study, that when they buy green brands, they are fully aware of this, and that they searched for those brands, and the choice was not random or coincidental, but was based on a careful selection, and was based on their previous knowledge of the green brands, its importance, and its role in preserving the environment and the lives of individuals.

Moreover, the results showed that the tourists 'attitude towards green brands while buying green products in Egypt has a positive and significant impact on Green Buying Behavior, which supports the third hypothesis H3. This result is consistent with what was mentioned by Teng 2009; Gupta and Ogden, 2009; Felix and Braunsberger, 2016; Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2014; Thøgersen et al., 2009; Suki 2016; and Chin et al. 2019, who all argued that green consumers build their purchasing decision depend on their environmental attitudes background, and customers with a positive attitude to a specific brand tend to have higher purchase intention level and positive buying behavior. This result can be attributed to the great confidence of tourists in green products, and in their positive return towards the environment and local communities, which prompted them to buy green products, and refuse to buy products that do not carry green brands even at lower prices, which proves great awareness and responsible buying behavior of this segment of tourists, and this is what was mentioned by some tourists while conducting the questionnaire for this study, that they have changed their view of buying tourism products inside Egypt, from regular products to green products, due to the recommendation of relatives and friends who went through the successful purchasing experience of green products in Egypt, which prompted them to change the purchase intention and attitude of their relatives and friends towards green products.

In the same context, the results showed that the

green brand positioning, green brand knowledge, and attitude towards green brands have a positive and significant impact on sustainable tourism development in Egypt, which supports the three hypotheses H4, H5, and H6. This result is consistent with what was mentioned by Huang et al., 2014; Suki 2016; Amerta et al. 2018; and Ihsan et. al, 2019 who mentioned that green brand positioning has a significant impact on green product purchase intention and sustainability of the industry, and agreed with Chen and Chang (2012), who affirmed that positive impact of knowledge on consumers' intention in relation to green products and sustainability, and it consists with Honkanen and Young (2015), who noted that the consumers' attitude when buying sustainable products was the most important factor in forecasting their motivation to purchase sustainable products. Meanwhile, this result could provide a logical explanation for what is happening in Egypt during the past few years, the spread of not a few non-governmental organizations calling for the development of the tourism industry towards green industry, which was a major reason for increasing the number of green tourism entities in Egypt (EIPR, 2016), such as green hotels, green restaurants, environmentally friendly tourism trips, responsible tourism packages, and the profession of an environmental guide, which helped to attract tourists looking for green tourism products, which supports the culture and plans of sustainable tourism development in Egypt.

Finally, the results showed that green buying behavior has a positive and significant direct impact on the sustainable tourism development in Egypt, and partially mediated the relationship between green product dimensions (green brand positioning, green brand knowledge, and attitude toward green brands) and sustainable tourism development which supports the seventh hypothesis H7. This result does not agree with what mentioned by Moisander (2007), who doubted the clarity of the relationship between the consumer's buying behavior and his/her thoughts towards sustainability, but this result is consistent with what was mentioned by Cherian and Jacob, 2012; Paço et al., 2013; Sidali et al., 2017; Amerta et al. 2018; and Ihsan et. al, 2019, who mentioned that people interested in green life and sustainability do exist, and green buying behavior is totally linked with sustainable and environmentally friendly purchasing.

Implications

The results achieved from this study show a good level of importance for the theoretical and practical implications of it, which can be explained in the following points:

- Green brand positioning is positively and significantly impacting the green buying behavior of tourists while they are buying green products or sustainable tourism packages. In terms of practical implications, it can be considered a very important result for marketers, who want to create more demand for their products and add a significant competitive advantage to the entities they represent.

- Green brand knowledge while buying a green product is positively and significantly impact the green buying behavior of tourists, theoretically, it supports the study of sources of knowledge and information for tourists about green products or sustainable tourism packages, and the impact of source of knowledge on green tourist buying behavior, and how to manage this source of knowledge. In terms of practical implications, it is an important result for marketers, and planners, to use a source of knowledge about sustainable tourism packages as a tool to influence the tourists 'decision.

- Tourists' attitude towards green brands while buying green products has a positive and significant impact on green buying behavior. Practically, this result is also very important for marketers, as successful green purchasing experiences can be used to increase future demand and change the purchasing behavior of potential tourists.

- Also, the green brand positioning, green brand knowledge, and attitude towards green brands have a positive and significant impact on sustainable tourism development. This result adds to the theoretical aspect and highlights the importance of green consumer behavior, which helps to explain some aspects related to tourists' purchase intention and buying decision and the factors that affect this decision. As for the practicalities, this result is important for tourism policy-makers in Egypt, while developing policies, strategies, and plans for sustainable tourism development, by making good use of experiences of green tourism entities that have successful experiences, and collecting credible and realistic data from this segment of tourists, to ensures the efficiency and quality of proposed national strategies.

- Green buying behavior has a positive and significant direct impact on sustainable tourism development, and partially mediated the relationship between green product dimensions and sustainable tourism development, This result is

logically consistent with all results mentioned above, as the use of green brand positioning to market green tourism products, improving tourists' knowledge of the green brands, and influencing their attitude towards green brands, leads to an increase in their intention to buy green brands, and impact their green buying behavior, which directly supports policies, strategies and plans for sustainable tourism development in Egypt, and helps to spread the culture of sustainability among all tourism stakeholders, which affirm the importance of making good use of these results demonstrated by this study by marketers, policymakers, and stakeholders in Egypt.

Limitations and Future Research Opportunities

This research has four limitations. First, the study collected data from tourists who visited Egypt, thus restraining the generalization of the study findings. It would consequently be advisable to gather data from different countries to validate the current study results. Second, the socio-demographic features of tourists could be further considered to detect the differences based on age, education, and nationality. Third, the purpose of visit (i.e., leisure and recreation, business and professional) could affect the tested hypotheses. Consequently, further research can employ multi-group analysis (Elshaer and Augustyn, 2016; and Augustyn et al., 2019) to inspect such differences. Fourth, the cross-sectional sample technique utilized in this paper is a further limitation. In any research in which causality is inferred, a longitudinal study approves stronger inferences (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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