

## **The Impact of Greenwashing on Green Purchase Intention with The Moderating Effect of Green Skepticism in the Organic Food Industry in Sri Lanka**

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Green marketing has grown rapidly in recent years, and businesses have used it to outperform their competitors. Greenwashing has become a critical factor in the organic food industry, especially in developing country markets such as Sri Lanka, where consumer trust plays a crucial role in green purchasing intention. While previous studies have been conducted in Western countries, this study in Sri Lanka is an attempt to partially fill the discrepancy. Therefore, this study investigates the impact of greenwashing on green purchase intention while investigating green skepticism as a moderating variable in the organic food industry in Sri Lanka. The researcher can extend the moderating effect of the factor of green skepticism among greenwashing and green purchase intention, which has been less used in previous studies. The researcher has developed a conceptual framework to examine the impact of greenwashing and green purchase intention in the Organic Food Industry in Sri Lanka. The variable green skepticism is also considered to examine the moderating effect of the above relationship.

This study has adopted a positivism research philosophy, and the researcher has used a quantitative methodological approach to examine causal relationships between the variables. This was cross-sectional descriptive research based on an online survey method and data were collected using a structured questionnaire and a 5-point Likert scale-based measure of the dimensions of greenwashing, green purchase intention and green skepticism. The questionnaire includes seven dimensions of greenwashing, five dimensions of green purchase intention and four dimensions of green skepticism. The sample consisted of 384 Sri Lankan consumer respondents. The researcher has used the convenience sample technique under the non-probability sampling method. Two hypotheses were developed based on

literature and hypotheses were tested using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) with Hayes process model and simple regression analysis.

After in-depth analysis, the researcher obtained the findings explained below. The study indicates that greenwashing has a significant negative impact on green purchase intention and significantly impacted green skepticism between greenwashing and green purchase intention in the organic food industry in Sri Lanka. This study's results reveal that greenwashing impacts green purchase intention. The study highlights useful data to assist practitioners in addressing these issues and emphasizes the significance of decreasing greenwashing for increasing green purchase intention. The findings offer recommendations for further study in countries that are developing as well as implications for businesses that seek to increase the consumption of organic foods and decrease green skepticism. The researcher has considered only the moderating effect of green skepticism, as there may be other variables that mediate or moderate the relationship between greenwashing and green purchase intention. Future researchers could explore the mediating and moderating impact of other factors overlooked in the current study, such as perceived risks, environmental concerns, and customer attitudes, information and knowledge that might affect the association between greenwashing and green purchase intention.

**Keywords:** *Greenwashing, Green Purchase Intention, Green Skepticism, Green Marketing, Organic Food Industry*