An Empirical Study of the Government Pro-Environment Policy Leading Effects on Multi-Level Factors that Influences on People’s Green Consumption Behaviour

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Abstract. Since the plastic had been launched and applied to our daily life, until today, its economic advantages made people use plastic products widely, such as cost-saving, easy to produce, stable structure, convenient, and so on. Also, the variety and quantity of plastic products have been increased to an incredible number that endangers the sustainable development of human beings. The research aims to explore the impact of government policies on consumers' green consumption behaviors, through multi-level factors’ mediation effects that are a new environment, green technology innovation, CSR. The proposed model was tested by the participants of Chinese International Students, the population is easy to be affected by surrounding. The collected data was analyzed through Hayes’ process Model 6, and the results indicate that the government's pro-environment policies had a positive effect on peoples’ green consumption behaviors. Besides, policies had a positive effect on CSR, and CSR had a positive effect on green technology development, which would help people form pro-environment awareness. This study contributes to the literature on how pro-environmental policies, green technology innovation effect on student’s green awareness and intention, as well as how those factors related to each other create a chain mediation effect on people' green consumption behavior. This study provides a mechanism for the society to assist the students to form green consumption behaviors, so as enlarge to assist more people to form green habits that lead by government pro-environmental policies to reduce the use of plastic products. Meanwhile, the mechanism proposed in this research could contribute to the sustainable development goal of governing “White Trash (Plastic Garbage)”.

Keywords: Pro-Environmental Policies, Green Technology Innovation, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Students’ New Environment Paradigm (NEP), Green Consumption Behaviour
1. Introduction
The plastic was invented by John Wesley Hyatt in the 19th century, a tough and elastic material. Since then, various substances have been mixed into the material, and the plastic family has grown larger and faster. Various types, such as PVC, PVP, and PB, have been developed and applied in different fields such as machinery, electronics, aerospace, and daily hardware. Plastic with its stable chemical characteristics, light physical characteristics, soon into peoples’ daily life [1].

What people did not expect is that the plastic products that once brought great convenience to life will eventually become a kind of tiny particles that cannot be completely decomposed and spread around the earth, damaging the environment and endangering the safety of living things [2]. The world commission on environment and development reports that our common future threatened by the plastic pollination [1]. According to the concept of sustainable development point of view, the plastic is a kind of difficult to recycle material, though naturally aging into granular, but still has very stable chemical properties, the degradation of different kinds of plastic products need period from 500 to 5000 years, at the same time will produce toxic substances, with the animals and plants on the absorption of toxic substances, eventually cycle to human beings [1]. However, people are continuously enjoying the convenience brought by plastic and use a lot of plastic products in human daily life, which results in the accumulation of plastic beyond its natural degradation cycle, and the existing human technology is difficult to eliminate the plastic particles on the earth. This causes the problem widely known as "white trash", plastic pollution [3]. Therefore, under the initiative of the United Nations, nations of UN member issues relative pro-environment policies to guidance of their corporates and citizens to participate the green concept, and how to solve the problem of plastic garbage in a trinity way with different social aspects, has become one of the urgent problems to be solved to achieve the sustainable development goals.

It is precisely because the existing technology is not able to solve the plastic pollution problems so that the Chinese government has introduced a series of domestic policies aimed at reducing use of plastic products, especially the "Notice of the General Office of State Council on Restricting the Production, Sale and Use of Plastic Shopping Bags" [4] which came into effect on June 1, 2008, and had carrying out by government at all level. This makes some corporates with social responsibility start to make contributions to sustainable development through green marketing strategy [5]. Although scientists around the world are actively developing biodegradable plastics and cultivating bacteria that can break down plastics, these methods cannot be widely spread in a short time. Therefore, the most effective way to reduce the generation of plastic waste is still to let students buy and use fewer plastic products. Enterprises with CSR are promoted green marketing plan by giving preferential treatment to students and other methods to promote their target customer to form a green consumption consciousness, and then cultivate students’ green consumption behavior [6]. When students realize that protecting the environment is to protect themselves, they will have a sense of buying fewer plastic products, so they will buy fewer plastic products.

The formation of green behavior will be influenced by many factors. The government’s policy makes a huge influence on leading the progress of science and technology on pro-environment innovations, corporations' green marketing strategy that direct and indirect effect citizens' environment-friendly behaviors. By all aspects of society working together, plastic pollution can be controlled in a better way. The green technology innovation could also do certainly help in solving the existing plastic pollution, and even able to find a plastic substitute. Corporations that are gathered CSR image, invest in green technology, as well as carried out green marketing strategy, would help with formalized students’ pro-environment behavior by reducing the use of plastic products, which should be encouraged by the government. Start with the environment protection effort of government at all levels, the corporations' green strategy would leaded by the relative policies that would enlarge the investment in green technology innovation, which could help on
consume to internalized pro-environment awareness and intention and eventually behave green consumption behavior continuous.

2. Literature review

2.1 Government’s Pro-Environment Policy
In the current global environment where countries focus on sustainable development, governments will formulate a series of policies to promote sustainable development [7]. For example, “Notice of the General Office of State Council on Restricting the Production, Sale and Use of Plastic Shopping Bags” is a ban that shows how the Chinese government responds to plastic surgery. These policies will not only target businesses to produce plastic products but also affect end-users in using plastic products. The ban is necessary to force citizens to change public behavior, using plastic products, that harm the environment [8]. People’s green consumption habits once formed will reflect as practicing green consumption behavior eventually [9]. Therefore,

H1: Pro-Environment Policy has a significant positive effect on people’s green consumption behavior.

2.2 CSR and Green Technology Innovation
In the past, corporate social responsibility was defined as the amount of tax a company had to pay to the government [10], but CSR has been redefined in modern society, which refers to business self-regulation, contributes to societal goals of charitable nature or had volunteered or ethically-oriented practices. The relationship between enterprises and the government is increasingly close, and more and more enterprise-related contents appear on the government's policy-making agenda [11]. Therefore,

H2: Pro-Environment Policy has a significant positive effect on enterprises’ CSR.

To some extent, enterprises' social responsibility can help on improving their brand image, but people may pay more attention to this enterprise in their daily life, and choose to buy the products of the enterprise had CSR to conduct and practice green consumption behaviors with certain self-satisfaction [12,13]. Therefore,

H3: Enterprises’ CSR has a significant positive effect on people’s green consumption behavior.
According to Demirel and Kesidou [14], government policies would have an impact on the degree of corporate responsibility for social responsibility, in addition, the enterprises follow the sustainable development policies formulated by the government and fulfill their corporate social responsibilities, the enterprises would like to upgrade green technologies and develop environmentally friendly products. Therefore,

H4: Enterprises’ CSR has a significant positive effect on green technology innovation.

Green technology innovation refers to the technology that produces sustainable recyclable products with harmless or less harm to the environment [15,16]. Some green products to a certain extent can bring more novel use experience to attract consumers especially for young adults such as students group, which provides the chance on helping the consumer to form green consumption behaviors [16,17]. Therefore,

H5: Green technology innovation has a significant positive effect on students’ Green Consumption behavior.

2.3 Students’ Awareness of Green Consumption
In the previous section, where mentioned that the formation of students’ green consumption consciousness would be affected by external factors, and many researchers believe that the environment-friendly products and the green concept would help on people to internalize the pro-environment awareness and intention. The degree of corporate responsibility for social responsibility can be perceived by students, and they consciously buy the green products produced by the enterprise, and students can choose new green products brought by the promotion of green technology. All these factors will positively promote the formation of students’ awareness of green consumption, which is finally reflected in students’ green consumption behavior. Many studies have shown that human behavior is influenced by subjective norms, which comes from the internal feeling of each person during interaction with their surroundings, but the formation of consciousness is influenced by some external factors [18]. The formation of students’ subjective consciousness is also the same and will affect Student behavior to some extent [19]. The consumption behaviors of students in daily life do not all come from clear subjective consciousness, but due to the habits formed before [19]. These indicate that the pro-environment awareness once formed due to external factors’ effect, would lead his/her green consumption behavior both consciously and unconsciously [20]. In addition, the New Environment Paradigm (NEP) was generally adopted to measure people’s pro-environment world view. Therefore,

H6: Green technology innovation has a significant positive effect on students’ NEP.
H7: Students’ NEP has a significant positive effect on Students’ Green Consumption behavior.

2.4 Chain Mediation Effect of CSR, TEC, and NEP
Based on previous researches, it has been found that pro-environmental policies have an impact on corporate social responsibility [21], corporate social responsibility has an impact on green technology innovation [22], green technology innovation has an impact on peoples’ NEP [23], and NEP will affect consumers’ green consumption behaviour [24]. Meanwhile, pro-environment policies will also affect consumers’ green consumption behaviour directly [25], so that the government pro-environment policy has a leading effect on multi-level factors, CSR, green technology innovation, personal NEP, and which forms people’s green consumption behaviour eventually. Therefore,
H8: CSR, Green Technology Innovation, and people’s NEP had formed a chain mediation effect on the relationship between Pro-Environment Policy and people’s green consumption behavior.

Table 1. Construct Summary

| Construct                      | Construct definition                                                                 | Construct source                      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Pro-environment Policy (PEP)  | In the current global environment where countries focus on sustainable development, governments will formulate a series of policies to promote sustainable development. | Pope, Annandale, and Morrison-Saunders [7] |
| Green Technology Innovation (TEC) | Green technology is a new technology that can produce sustainable products          | Shrivastava [15]                      |
| New Ecological Paradigm (NEP) | Studies have shown that human behaviour is influenced by subjective consciousness, which comes from the brain of each person and is a subjective "state", but the formation of consciousness is influenced by some external factors. | Dunlap and Van Liere [26,27]          |
| Corporation Social Responsibility (CSR) | In the past, corporate social responsibility was defined as the amount of tax a company had to pay to the government. | Friedman M. [10]                      |
| Green Behaviour (GBeh)        | The consumption behaviour of students’ consumption green products is green consumption behaviour. | Marquina Feldman & Vasquez-Parraga [13] |

3. Methodology

3.1 Samples and data collection
Participants for this research are students who studied in University in Bangkok, Thailand, and Judgment sampling and snowball sampling methods were used for data collection, since part of the data collected based on a paper-printed questionnaire, while rest were collected through a web-based questionnaire. The author personally contacted the international college students in the class, distributed the typed questionnaires, and gave the students participating in the study about 20 minutes to fill out the questionnaires for the study. In this study, a total of 320 questionnaires were distributed, and 230 questionnaires were distributed in and out of class. Of these, 196 surveys have been completed, with a response rate of 61.3% (paper). The demographics of the 282 respondents are as followed. There were 34% males and 66% females who are age of 21.30 (± 2.526) years old, and the respondents stay in Thailand for 4 to 48 months, while 93.6% of samples are getting their bachelor’s degree. According to statistical analysis, the proportion of male respondents is higher than that of female respondents. Almost all of the subjects were undergraduates with social work experiences.
3.2 Measurement Instruments
The questionnaire consists of a Pro-Environment Policy scale, Green technology scales, Green New Ecological Paradigm scale, Corporation Social Responsibility (CSR), Green Consumption Behavior that represent and measure the concepts.

The pro-environment Policy of the government was measured with the ESS scale, which developed by Pelletier [28], and 4 items in satisfaction of government environment policy were selected to measure the impact of government policies on people’s green consumption behavior. The items that were scored on the original scale were seven-point Likert scale.

Green technology Innovation was measured based on people’s attitude towards purchasing green products produced by green technology proposed by Chan, Yee [29] to measure the impact of green technology innovation with 4 items of five-point Likert scale.

New Environmental Paradigm (NEP) was measured by the 15 items five-point Likert scale developed by Dunlap, Van Liere [26], which generally used to measure the environmentally friendly world view, refers to the extent of one’s green consumption awareness and intention.

Corporation Social Responsibility (CSR) was measured by 5 items on a five-point Likert scale proposed by Arli and Lasmono [30], which able to measures the respond of enterprises’ CSR on government policies, and impacts on the promotion of green technologies.

Green Consumption Behavior was measured by the ecologically Conscious Student Behavior (ECCB) scale developed by Roberts [31], and 5 highly relevant items with the current study from 30 items.

In other to maintain internal consistency and encourage participants to express their feelings the items were changed into a six-point Likert scale, which ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree) repeatedly in this research.

3.3 Data analysis
This study analyzed the collected data by start testing the validity and reliability of each variables’ KMO and Cronbach’s alpha value to determine the scale of this study are reliable measurement tools. Then, move on ran a correlation test to testify the existing relations among variables with the help of SPSS. Furthermore, the hypotheses and chain mediation effects, both direct and indirect effects will be testifying through Hayes [32] PROCESS macros.

4. Results
In this study, the scale used to measure New Ecological Paradigm NEP (KMO = 0.896> 0.7, Cronbach's alpha = 0.899 > 0.7) has good reliability and validity after delete item 6 and item10 since it is not consistent with the other 12 items (see Table 2 for details). Pro-Environment Policy scale (PEP), CSR scale, technology scale (TEC) and Green Consumption Behavior scale (GBeh), all have good reliability and all five variables are correlated significantly, results show in Table 2, which covers the results of correlation analysis, which discloses all the measured variables are significantly positively related with each other, which lead our research to further step – regression analysis.

The research used Hayes [32],[33] PROCESS macro v3.3 to test our hypothesized fully saturated seven-stage chain of serial mediation. Model 6 was used to test the association. The research used
1000 bootstrapping resamples to produce 95% confidence intervals for the indirect effect. If the confidence interval does not contain zero, one can conclude that meditation is significant. The findings supported our theorized seven-stage chain of a serial mediation model in which government pro-environment policies on control plastic positively affect students’ green behaviors via affect corporations’ social responsibility (CSR), invest in green technologies, which helps on students reduce the usage of plastic products. The results show in Table 3 and Table 4, since hypotheses testing results are listed in Table 2, where all the hypotheses are tested for their possible association, meanwhile, Table 3 shows the direct, indirect, as well as the total effects of the proposed model. Overall, the hypotheses made in the previous section are all supported along with the model effects (see Table 5 for details).

5. Conclusion

5.1 Research Limitation
The research provides solid evidence of government pro-environment policies leading position in environment protection practices. The research also found that NEP also an important factor that able to help people with green consumption behavior practice, which contributes to plastic product reduction issues directly. What’s more, it has been found that the enterprises’ CSR is an important factor to carry out government policy in people’s green awareness and intention practicing, which reflects on green consumption behaviors quickly, and this research finding makes a contribution to achieving sustainable development by reducing plastic demand. The results indicated that enterprises’ CSR is an important role in response to the government after sustainable policy, which accelerates the development of green technology, green products, helps people to form green consumption habits. In short, the government's sustainable development policy would be promoting enterprises to fulfill their social responsibilities, while enterprises fulfilling their social responsibilities, the side effect would be caused such as promoting the development of green technologies, influencing people's green consumption behaviors.

Additionally, the statistical analysis of the research had supportive results to the hypothesis that proposed earlier, and reveal the relationship between government pro-environment policies and green consumption behavior are mediated by CSR, green technology innovation, peoples' environment world view formalization works together as a chain mediation effect, which contributes to plastic product reduction issue indirectly.

This study has several limitations that need to be illustrated. The data was collected from student groups due to channel limitation, while non-random sampling method was adopted due to time and funds limitation, since judgemental sampling methods, the social expectation bias would be raised in the collected data. According to the results of the research, the follow-up researches would like to enlarge the samples' diversity to testify to the proposed model. To continuously make contributions for sustainable development, more relevant factors should be selected to add to the model to internalized the green concept and formalized green consumption behavior.

Acknowledgements
Thanks for the support of International College, Krik University. Thanks for the support from SCPA research team.

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Appendix 1

Table 2. Reliability and Correlation Analysis (N=282).

|     | Cronbach's a | KMO | Mean  | Std. Dev. | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   |
|-----|--------------|-----|-------|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1. PEP | .869         | 0.733 | 4.681 | 1.155     | 1   |     |     |     |
| 2. TEC | .845         | 0.737 | 4.829 | 1.046     | .651** | 1 |     |     |
| 3. NEP | .899         | 0.896 | 4.859 | 1.064     | .600** | .627** | 1 |     |
| 4. CSR | .851         | 0.856 | 4.567 | 1.023     | .679** | .745** | .734** | 1 |
| 5 GBeh | .880         | 0.895 | 4.765 | 1.046     | .708** | .677** | .694** | .731** |

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

Table 3. Regression Analysis (N=282)

| Items | M1 (CSR) | M2 (TEC) | M3 (NEP) | Y (GBeh) | Y (GBeh) |
|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|       | β | LLC | UCL | β | LLC | UCL | β | LLC | UCL | β | LLC | UCL | β | LLC | UCL | |
| X (PEP) | .602 | .525 | .678 | .244 | .151 | .336 | .141 | .038 | .243 | .641 | .566 | .716 | .275 | .184 | .366 |
| M1 (CSR) | .574 | .469 | .678 | .552 | .420 | .684 | .234 | .106 | .362 |
| M2 (TEC) | .134 | .060 | .258 | .152 | .034 | .262 |
| M3 (NEP) | .384 | .100 | .484 | .482 | .103 | .862 |
| Const | 1.74 | 1.37 | 2.11 | .928 | .713 | .132 | .928 | .713 | .132 |
| R² | R²=46.16%, P=.0000 | R²=59.42%, P=.0000 | R²=56.43%, P=.0000 | R²=50.12%, P=.0000 | R²=65.84%, P=.0000 |

Table 4. Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects (N=282)

| Effect of PEP on GBeh | Effect | SE | p | LL CI | UL CI |
|-----------------------|--------|----|---|------|------|
| Total Effect          | .6415  | .0382 | .0000 | .5663 | .7168 |
| Direct Effect         | .2754  | .0460 | .0000 | .1849 | .3660 |
| Indirect Effects      |        |     |     |      |      |
| Total indirect effects| .3661  | .0520 | .2677 | .4696 |
| Ind1 PEP -> CSR -> GBeh | .1413  | .0497 | .0545 | .2500 |
| Ind2 PEP -> TEC -> GBeh | .0373  | .0207 | .0009 | .0825 |
| Ind3 PEP -> NEP -> GBeh | .0344  | .0155 | .0065 | .0663 |
| Ind4 PEP -> CSR -> TEC -> GBeh | .0529  | .0277 | .0014 | .1114 |
| Ind5 PEP -> CSR -> NEP -> GBeh | .0810  | .0271 | .0331 | .1400 |
| Ind6 PEP -> TEC -> NEP -> GBeh | .0080  | .0050 | .0001 | .0195 |
| Ind7 PEP -> CSR -> TEC -> NEP -> GBeh | .0113  | .0071 | .0001 | .0281 |
### Table 5. Output of Hypothesis (N=282)

| Hypothesis                                                                 | Output   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| **H1**: Pro-Environment Policy has a significant positive effect on people's green consumption behavior. | Supported |
| **H2**: Pro-Environment Policy has a significant positive effect on enterprises' CSR. | Supported |
| **H3**: Enterprises’ CSR has a significant positive effect on people’s green consumption behavior. | Supported |
| **H4**: Enterprises’ CSR has a significant positive effect on green technology innovation. | Supported |
| **H5**: Green technology innovation has a significant positive effect on Students’ Green Consumption behavior. | Supported |
| **H6**: Green technology innovation has a significant positive effect on students’ NEP. | Supported |
| **H7**: Students’ NEP has a significant positive effect on Students’ Green Consumption behavior. | Supported |
| **H8**: CSR, Green Technology Innovation, and people’s NEP had formed a chain mediation effect on the relationship between Pro-Environment Policy and people’s green consumption behavior. | Supported |