



A STUDY ON FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR TOWARDS GREEN PRODUCTS IN NAMAKKAL

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Abstract: *The paper analyses the factors influencing the consumer behavior towards green products. The objective of the study is to analyze the factors that significantly contribute to induce their willingness to opt for green products. Structured questionnaire were employed in and around areas in Namakkal to collect responses on factors such as social influence, attitude towards environment, environmental awareness and environmental perception. Convenient sampling method is used to choose samples from the population. The data thus collected is tabulated and analyzed using statistical tools such as simple percentage analysis, cross tabulation and chi-square analysis.*

Keywords: *Consumer behavior, Green products, Environmental awareness, Environmental perception, Attitude, Social influence*

INTRODUCTION

In recent era, Green marketing is the challenging and inevitable concept. It has been clear from various researches that awareness on environmental problems has been increased significantly. Today's consumers are more conscious and concern towards environmental problems which in turn urge the manufacturer to redefine their business portfolio by producing environmental friendly products. In developed countries, manufacturers have been given incentives to boost up their business to manufacture green products. The manufacturers need to understand the consumers' acceptance level of green products and identify the factors that influence their purchase decision and its impact over environment and their nature of green buying behavior.

Green product can be defined as a product which is sustainable, devoid use of pesticides, made with recycled material and simple packaging (ottman, 1998). Therefore green consumers can be defined as those who focus on the purchase and consumption process especially as it relates to the production process and disposal of products as well as their impact on the ecological environment. In other words green consumers are the one who



prefer green products over ordinary products and tried to reduce the impact of purchase on the environment. The primary objective of the study is to analyze the factors such as social influence, environmental attitude; environmental awareness and perception towards the environment influencing the consumer behavior towards green products.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Various researchers postulated their views related to green marketing by conducting research studies towards analyzing awareness, attitude and perception of customers towards green products. Some of the literary study were analysed in this study.

Krause (1993)¹ conducted an empirical study on environmental consciousness with respect to environment and behavior and his study reveals that culture, religion and life style significantly determines environmental consciousness while choosing products that will create harmful effects to the environment.

Jobber's (2000)² conducted study on environmentally responsible purchase behavior and the results reveal those who have greater concern towards environmental issues will eventually leads to green consumption. It is also noted that there exists a positive correlation between attitude and behavior of the customers.

Kang and James (2007)³ concludes in his research study that the environment behavior is considered as an attribute of environmental consciousness. Moreover demographic variables determine environmental behavior and create a positive effect on environmental consciousness. It is interesting to say that men are more conscious towards the environment and exhibit positive environmental behavior than women.

Manaktola and Jauhari (2007)⁴ conducted research on the factors influencing attitude and behavior of consumers towards environmental friendly practices in the lodging industry in India. The results of the study reveal that consumers are more conscious towards green practices followed in India. Customers are giving importance to eco-friendly service and at the same time they are not ready to compromise on service quality. Customers are willing to pay extra premium for eco-friendly services.

David (2011)⁵ conducted research study on willingness of consumers to pay for home appliances manufactured by green power companies and the results indicate that consumer socio-economic profile and attitude influence to go for purchase of green products



particularly attitude towards environmental issues have a direct impact on consumers' willingness to purchase green products.

Akehurst et al.(2012)⁶ identified determinants of effective green purchase behavior using survey method. The results from the study show that psychographic variables plays significant role in determining the green purchase intention rather than socio-economic variables. Consumers who have high eco-conscious behavior have high green purchase intention. Perceived consumer effectiveness also determines green purchase intention.

Albayrak et al.(2012)⁷ analyzed the influence of environmental consequences and skepticism on green purchase behavior by applying plan behavior theory. The conclusion from the study says that those customers who face high level of environmental consequences and less skeptical reflect a positive attitude, have high perceived behavior control which induces them to have stronger intentions to become green consumer in the near future.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- The primary objective is to study the factors influencing consumer behavior towards green products in Namakkal.
- To analyze the attitude of customers towards environment in Namakkal.
- To examine the factors contribute to the customers towards environmental awareness in Namakkal.
- To know the perception of customers towards green products in Namakkal.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on primary survey of 200 respondents belonging to Namakkal. This study is confined to areas in and around Namakkal only. The study is restricted to views and opinion of customers towards green products only. Structured questionnaire is used to record the responses on variables such as social influence, attitude towards environment, environmental awareness and environmental perception. Convenient sampling method is used to choose samples from the population. The data thus collected is tabulated and analyzed using statistical tools such as simple percentage analysis, cross tabulation and chi-square analysis. The socio demographic profiles of the respondents were also recorded on the parameters such as gender, age, education level, occupation and monthly income.



DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1 Socio-economic profile of respondents

Profile	Categories	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	114	57
	Female	86	43
Age (in years)	20-29	43	21.5
	30-39	68	34
	40-49	57	28.5
	> 50	32	16
Marital status	Single	87	43.5
	Married	108	54
	Divorced	05	2.5
Level of Education	Post graduate	46	23
	Under graduate	104	52
	Diploma	35	17.5
	School	15	7.5
	others	0	0
Monthly Income	Below 5000	09	4.5
	5000 – 10000	35	17.5
	10001-15000	63	31.5
	15001-20000	80	40
	Above 20000	13	6.5

Source: Primary data

Table 2 Social influence

S.no	Parameters	Frequency	%
1.	Family and friends	78	34
2.	Peer groups	32	16
3.	Social status	50	25
4.	Government norms	22	11
5.	Social Media	18	09

Source: Primary data

It is inferred from the above analysis that 78 respondents are influenced towards green products through their family and friends, 32 respondents are influenced through peer groups, 50 respondents are influenced to purchase green products due to maintain social status and 22 and 18 respondents are influenced due to government norms and corporate pressures.



Table 3 Attitude towards Environment

S.No	Parameters	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
1.	Gradual depletion of Earth's resources	62	28	05	05	0
2.	Clean environment boosts human life	54	36	07	03	0
3.	Individual responsibility plays major role	56	22	17	05	0
4.	Role of government is inevitable	64	28	08	0	0
5.	Positive attitude leads to positive environment behavior	35	52	10	03	0

Source: Primary data

It is inferred from the above analysis that majority of the respondents(62%) are having strong opinion that earth's resources are depleting gradually. 54% respondents strongly believe that clean environment boosts human life.56% respondents strongly agree that individual responsibility plays major role in influencing their attitude towards environment. 28% respondents agree that role of government is inevitable and 52% respondents agree that positive attitude always leads to positive environment behavior.

Table 4 Environmental Awareness

S.No	Parameters	Strongly Aware (%)	Aware (%)	Neutral (%)	Unaware (%)	Strongly unaware (%)
1.	Awareness towards green products	22	49	12	17	0
2.	Aware of environment problems (deforestation, global warming, ozone depletion, monsoon failure etc)	32	45	10	08	05
3.	Aware of Green companies	13	22	08	33	24
4.	Aware of green certification process and green labels.	18	22	10	38	12
5.	Aware of environment programs (like tree planting, vanmahotsav, seminars and conferences, environment marathon etc)	15	22	03	36	24

Source: Primary data

It is inferred from the above analysis that 22% are strongly aware and nearly half of the respondents are aware of green products, 45% of the respondents are aware of



environmental problems like deforestation, global warming, ozone depletion, monsoon failure etc., only 13 and 22% are strongly aware and aware of green companies, 38% are not aware of green certification process and green labels and finally 15% and 22% are strongly aware and aware of environmental programs.

Table 5 Perception towards Environment

S.No	Parameters	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
1.	I perceive green products are good to the environment.	35	42	06	10	07
2.	I perceive green products are costly.	51	45	04	0	0
3.	I perceive green advertisements are misleading.	15	20	22	12	31
4.	I believe green consumption will reduce environment issues	32	45	03	13	07
5.	I perceive green products are not easily available	46	32	09	13	0

Source: Primary data

It is inferred from the above analysis that 35% and 42% of the respondents are strongly agree and agree with the opinion that green products are good to the environment, 51% perceive that green products are costly, 31% perceive that green advertisements are misleading them, 45% of them believe that green consumption will reduce environmental issues, 46% perceive that green products are not easily available.

Table 6 Relationship between Age and Social influence

Age	Social influence					Total
	Family & Friends	Peer groups	Social status	Government norms	Corporate pressure	
20-29	20	02	18	03	0	43
30-39	32	08	28	0	0	68
40-49	15	20	04	06	12	57
>50	11	02	0	13	06	32
Total	78	32	50	22	18	200

Source: Primary data

It is inferred from the above analysis that majority of the respondents under age group 20-29 and 30-39 are influenced towards green purchase through their family and friends. 18 and 20 respondents under age group 20-29 and 30-39 are influenced towards green purchase due to social status. 20 respondents under age group 40-49 are influenced



towards green purchase through peer groups and 15 respondents are through their family and friends. 13 respondents under age group >50 and 06 of them are influenced towards green purchase due to government norms and corporate pressure.

Relationship between Gender and Awareness towards Green Products

H₀: There is no significant difference in the sample means of gender and awareness towards green products.

H₁: There is significant difference in the sample means of gender and awareness towards green products.

Table 7

Variables	Male (Mean) N=114	Female(Mean) N=86	Significance	Findings
Awareness towards green products	12.50	12.41	0.7257	Not significant

Source: Primary data

It is inferred from the above analysis that gender has been taken as an independent variable and awareness towards green products as dependent variable, the significant value is 0.73(approx.) which is more than the table value i.e. 0.05. This is due to chance because of difference in sample means. It proves that awareness towards green products does not relate with the gender of respondents.

Relationship between Income and Environmental Perception

H₀: There is no significant difference in the sample means of Income and Environmental perception.

H₁: There is significant difference in the sample means of Income and Environmental perception

Table 8

	Value	df	Asymp.sig (2 sided)
Pearson chi-square	76.54	16	.005
Likelihood ratio	83.62	16	.000
Linear by Linear	2.73	1	.017
No. of valid cases	200		

Source: Primary data

It is inferred from the above analysis that Income has been taken as an independent variable and environmental perception as dependent variable, the above table shows that, the chi square value is 76.54 and p value is 0.005(approx.), the null hypothesis is rejected,



since $p < 0.05$, hence it can be concluded that, income has effect on environmental perception and there is significant relationship between income and environmental perception.

MAJOR FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

From the above analysis it is found that nearly half of the respondents are influenced to purchase green products through their family and friends and 25% are influenced to go for green consumption to maintain their status in the society. Specifically respondents under age group 30-39 are influenced more by their family and friends. Respondents who are 50 and above are giving more importance to follow government norms while making their purchases. It is found that gender of the respondents does not affect the level of awareness towards green products and hence there is no significant relation between gender and awareness towards green products. But income of the respondents plays a significant role in deciding their perception towards environment. Hence from the above analysis it is evident that there exists significant relationship between income and environmental perception. Only few respondents are aware of green companies and green certification process and procedures so it is suggested that green companies should strengthen their advertising strategy and deliver true and detailed information about their green product portfolio and their green certification labels and symbols. Government should tight the people to follow environmental norms as more people are not care about the environmental norms framed by the government.

CONCLUSION

Nowadays most of the people are making the purchase by getting opinion from their family and friends right from low investment daily use products to huge investment long life products. So this variable influences customers the most to go for green consumption. Moreover to maintain status in the society that they are concern for the environment, people pot green products. Today everyone aware that earth's resources are gradually depleting and people believe that individual responsibility is needed to preserve the environment. It is widely spread myth among the people that green products are expensive, does not provide long life, not easily available etc. this myth should be removed by the green companies by providing a detailed, precise and true information to the customers. Finally it is concluded that the factors such as social influence, attitude towards green



products, environment awareness and perception influencing consumer behavior towards green products in Namakkal is quite good and satisfactory.

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