

Investigating Consumer Motivation towards the Purchase of Green Products: A Demographic Study

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ABSTRACT

*With growing awareness and responsiveness as regards environmental problems and its consequences, the majority of the customer is changing their life style and started using green products. Because of changing behavior of customers towards environment, the companies are also focusing on green marketing strategies. The aim of this paper was to analyze consumer motivation towards the purchase of green products on the basis of demographic profile of the respondents in Indore city. The study was based on survey research. A self structured questionnaire was used for primary data collection. Total 299 duly filled questionnaires were received from the targeted respondent. Eight green purchase motives were taken into the consideration and it was analyzed with respect to different demographic profiles of the respondents. The data were analyzed through mean, standard deviation and independent *t* test. It was examined that there is significant difference in various green purchase motives with respect to gender, age, education and income.*

Keywords: *Green Product; Green purchase motives; Environment; Green purchase intention.*

1.0 Introduction

Due to the increase in industrialization globally, the major challenge for all the developed and developing countries is the sustainability of environment.

Increasing awareness among customers for the environment, make them understand the impact of their purchase and consumption on environmental consequences. Customers are becoming more cautious about the surroundings in which they are living. Environmental awareness catches the eye of customers towards green

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products or eco friendly products. Companies also started contributing to it by producing green products so that they can retain and raise their market share. Companies and customers, both have started paying attention to the environment. Government has also made the policies for the companies in context of environment protection. Due to increasing environment concern, the firms initiated to produce eco friendly product, which has functional use for consumers D'Souza et al. ((2006). A green product is defined as "a product that was manufactured using toxic-free ingredients and environmentally-friendly procedures, and which is certified by a recognized organization" (Gurau and Ranchhod, 2005). According to Nielsen Global survey of Corporate Social Responsibility, Q1, 2015, 66% of global respondents are agreed that they are willing to pay more for products and services that come from companies that are committed to positive social and environmental impact, up from 55% in 2014, and 50% in 2013. Global population will reach 9.6 billion by 2050, the equivalent of almost three planets could be required to provide the natural resources needed to sustain current lifestyles.

Ramayah, Lee, and Mohamad, (2010), elaborate Green purchase intention as the consumers' willingness to purchase green products. Intentions capture the motivational factors that influence green purchase behavior of consumers. Green products refers to products that incorporate the strategies in recycling with recycled content, reduced packaging or using less toxic materials to reduce the impact on the natural environment (Chen & Chai, 2010). Schlegelmilch *et al.* (1996) categorized green products into general green products, recycled paper products, products not tested on animals, environmentally friendly detergents, organically-grown fruit and vegetables, ozone-friendly aerosols and energy-efficient products. The industries can initiate practicing their process of producing the product by concerning environmental issues which could reduce the harmful impact on human health and environment (Tsai, Chuang, Chao, & Chang, 2012). Laric and Lynagh (2010) said that Samsung had run an environmental program named as "Planet First" to endorse the green concept among the society with an objective of minimizing the effect of using high rate technology on environment. Samsung had also shown its accountability towards environment in another way which convey green message to the consumers by Samsung web site and ESPN Magazine, Which can approve its commitment to sustainability. Grunert (1995) said that consumer household purchases were account for 40% of the environmental damage. Rokka and Uusitalo (2008) argued that consumers not only influenced with their environmental consciousness but they also consider the product's attributes while choosing any product. They further said that it is not always happen that a highly environment concern consumer will surely purchase the green products.

2.0 Review of Literature

Individuals who spend money to purchase green products and have a high environmental consciousness and knowledge level are referred to as green customers (Norazah and Norbayah, 2015b). The main objective of consumer positive purchase behavior towards environment is to sustain the environment. Gaden et al (2011). It was observed that there is rising demand of eco friendly products which explained the consumers growing concern for the environment and this movement of “going-green” has expanded globally due to exaggerated awareness of living in a healthier way (Norazah, 2013b; Soyez, 2012; Thøgersen et al., 2015). Paul et al. (2016) noted that the attitude of Indian consumers significantly predicts their purchase intention of a green product. Huang et al (2014) stated that consumer’s could adopt a greener life style in their buying behavior with the level of awareness, interest and demand if they have the knowledge about the benefits of green products aligned with the products performance. Mehmet and Gul (2014) examined the demographic characteristics of consumer buying behavior towards green products and their study resulted that there was significant relationships between age, sex, marital status, education level with reference to purchasing behavior of green product. Several research has been done on the gender impact on environmental concern, it was found that females are more concern than males for the environmental issues and they showed their willingness in resolving these issues (Ottman ,1992; Memery et al., 2005; Paco et al., 2009) but in some other research studies (Mostafa, 2007; D’Souza et al., 2007), it was observed that males acquired more knowledge on environmental issues and females are more conscious about the environment quality. Laheri (2017) also investigated the purchase behavior towards green products and found that customers showed significant different behavior with age, gender and education. He found that consumers showed significant different behavior with respect to age and income, they did not behave significantly different with respect to their subjective norm for purchase of the green products. It was found in the previous studies that product features positively influenced purchase of green products (e.g., Chen et al., 2012; Young et al., 2010). Also, consumers favored functional attributes of the product (that fulfill personal needs and desires) over its ethical characteristics (Chen & Lobo, 2012; Tsakiridou et al., 2008).

3.0 Objectives of Study

- To examine the purchase motives of the consumers towards green products with respect to demographic variables in Indore city.

- To examine the effect of demographic variables on purchase intention of green products.

4.0 Methodology

The study aimed to analyze the effect of various variables of green product on customer's purchase intention in Indore city, as a universe population. For collecting primary data, structured questionnaire has been used. The convenience sampling method was used to collect the responses from 299 customers. A five point scale was used to measure the responses against each of the variables considered for the studies. To fill up the questionnaire, respondents were suppose to mention their choices for each of the variables, using a five-point Likert's scaling technique (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree). For the analysis, mean, standard deviation and Independent t test were used. The following hypothesis were framed:

H01: There is no significant difference in various motives of green product purchase with respect to gender.

H02: There is no significant difference in various motives of green product purchase with respect to different age groups.

H03: There is no significant difference in various motives of green product purchase with respect to different education group.

H04: There is no significant difference in various motives of green product purchase with respect to different income group.

5.0 Data Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

S. No	Demographic Factor	Labels	N = 299	%
1	Gender	Male	146	48.83
		Female	153	51.17
2.	Age	18 – 25	140	46.82
		25 – 40	96	32.11
		40 Above	63	21.07
3.	Education	School	47	15.72
		Graduation	98	32.78
		Post Graduation	120	40.13
		Other	34	11.37
4.	Income	Below 15,000	52	17.39
		15,000 – 30,000	77	25.75
		30,000 – 50,000	61	20.41
		Above 50,000	109	36.45

Source: Primary data, collected by the author

Table 2: Significant Difference in Demographic Profiles for Various Green Product Purchase Motives

Prefer to Purchase GREEN PRODUCTS? Because:	Gender	Age	Education	Income
1. I want to preserve the earth.	Yes (p=0.015)	Yes (P=0.010)	Yes (p=0.001)	Yes (p=0.007)
2. I just like green products	No (p=0.078)	No (P=0.580)	Yes (p=0.040)	No (p=0.872)
3. I feel trendy / fashionable	No (p=0.721)	Yes (P=0.000)	Yes (p=0.000)	Yes (p=0.049)
4. If I do NOT purchase, people could judge me	Yes (P=0.024)	Yes (p=0.000)	Yes (p=0.000)	No (p=0.604)
5. It is healthy	No (p=0.090)	No (p=0.460)	Yes (p=0.006)	Yes (p=0.000)
6. Have a better quality / performance than conventional products	No (p=0.252)	Yes (p=0.000)	No (p=0.389)	No (p=0.063)
7. Good for the environment	Yes (p=0.007)	Yes (p=0.003)	No (p=0.054)	Yes (p=0.001)
8. Good Taste	No (p=0.096)	No (p=0.144)	No (p=0.055)	Yes (p=0.000)

Source: Primary data, collected by the author

6.0 Results and Discussion

H01: It was found that gender make significant difference in their positive purchase intention for green product with the objective of preserving earth, their societal image and environment protection ($p < .05$). But male and female do not make any significant difference for the positive purchase intention for green product with the motive of its healthiness, good taste and better quality in comparison to conventional products ($p > 0.05$).

Males and females both are aware and agreed on the green product attributes that they are healthy, quality and taste is better than conventional products and they like to use green products also but they do not agree that use of green products makes them fashionable or trendy. Females are more inclined towards the protection of environment and they think that purchasing green products reflects their societal image also but males are more influence with the concept of preserving earth by using green products. It is

also supported by Haytko & Matulich (2010) ascertained females were more environmentally responsible and revealed higher positive attitude than males towards green advertising and green products. Florenthal & Arling (2011) examined individual's green life style, green attitudes and green behavior intentions based on gender and income. They found that females value green product attributes more than males though they do not practice greener life style. Rahim et. al (2012) also supported this findings by stating females have more positive attitude towards green advertising which shows their more environmental concern. Wahid et. al (2011) also observed that females showed more positive purchase behavior than males. Banerjee and Mckeage (1994) also found that females are more ecologically conscious than men (Laroche *et. al.* 2001).

H02: It is observed that Age has significant impact on the positive purchase intention for green product with an objective of preserving earth, feel trendy, societal image, better quality, environment protection ($p < .05$) but age do not show any significant impact on the positive purchase intention for green product with the reason of healthy, liking of green products, good taste ($p > 0.05$).

There was difference in the observations of previous researcher about the impact of different age group on the green product purchase behavior. It was found in the present study that the consumer of age group 25-40 years were more motivated to purchase and use the green products due to its better quality than conventional products, good for the environment and it also preserve earth but the respondents of age group 18-25 years believed that purchasing and using green products affects their image in the society and also feel them trendy. Youngsters, mostly students are more conscious about the fashion trend and about their impression in the society. In a research study by Chan (1996), found that younger consumer were more interested towards environmentally friendly products. Straughan (1999) have done a research on college students and investigated that age and environmentally conscious consumer behavior was notably correlated.

H03: It can be seen from above table that Education has significant impact on the positive purchase intention for green product with an objective of preserving earth, feel trendy, societal image, healthy, liking of green products ($p < .05$) but education do not show any significant impact on the positive purchase intention for green product with the reason of good taste, better quality, environment protection ($p > 0.05$).

Chan (1996) studied buying behavior of Canadian and Hong Kong consumers and examined that more educated consumers were more magnetized towards environmentally friendly products. Roberts (1996) and Paco et al (2009) also supported that education had an impact on consumer behavior towards eco friendly products, they said that education level is directly proportional to environmental concern. It may be

because education level increases the awareness level of environmental issues and also about green product's benefits.

H04: It was found that income make significant difference in their positive purchase intention for green product with the objective of preserving earth, its healthiness, feel trendy, good taste and environment protection ($p < .05$) But it do not make any significant difference for the positive purchase intention for green product with the motive of their societal image, liking and better quality in comparison to conventional products ($p > 0.05$).

Buttel and Flinn (1974) also found an association between environmental concern and incomes. They said that middles and upper middle income level individual also shown interest to pay attention to environmental consequences in buying green products (Murphy, Kangun and Locander, 1978). It was also supported by many researcher Chan (2000), Carter & Kale (2000), Laroche & Bergeron (2001), Fotopoulos (2002), Mohammad (2009), and Mahmoud et al. (2011) that Income also influence consumer purchasing behaviour in green product. Chia, Chow, Ong and Woon (2013) suggested that high income level consumers are more interested in purchasing organic products as they are willing to pay high price for certified organic products. They further discussed increase in income motivates individual consumers to choose green products for their food choice.

7.0 Conclusion

The study reached to the conclusion after doing overall study in context of Motivation towards purchase of green products that demographic variable plays significant role with regards to consumer motivation to purchase green products. Previous studies suggested that a product's functional and green attributes form another group of motives that influence consumers' green purchase behavior (Young et al., 2010). The demand and consumption of green products is highly influenced with product's specific attributes viz. health related benefits, superior quality, and good taste (Aertsens et al., 2011). There are various motives/reasons behind purchasing green products which have diverse impact on Consumers' profiles. It was seen that males, middle age (25-40 years) consumers, more educated and high income level consumers were more influenced with green products functional attributes but females, young consumers (18-25 years), less educated were shown more interest to the subjective norms of green products which were a motivation factor for them to purchase green products. Marketers should give emphasis to encourage all type of individuals to purchase green products in order to save environment. They can run campaign related to

the awareness and knowledge of green products and its benefits. They can also attract their customers by providing variety of green products in all segments with reasonable price and availability.

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