Analysis of environmental Antecedents of Green Consumer Behavior in India

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ABSTRACT

Consumer actions strongly affect the environment, it is important to know the underlying factors of consumer behaviour in green purchasing. Present study throws the light on those environmental factors that effect the purchasing behaviour of green consumer. Environmental antecedents of green consumer behaviour like psycho-graphical, personality traits, cultural values, environmental knowledge, consumer awareness and other environmental antecedents were listed below to study them in deep. This paper identifies and tries to understand the purchase behavior of green products of urban consumers. Data were collected from the four directions of Udaipur city. Descriptive statistics, Reliability and Validity were applied to study the factors effecting the green consumer behaviour.

Key words: Green consumer, Consumer behaviour, Sustainability, Environmental Antecedents, Green Behaviour, Environmental knowledge.

Introduction

In the last several decades, the environment has become an increasingly noticeable concern for socially responsible behaviour, and issues in the environmental domain have been gaining the attention of researchers in marketing. Green consumer behaviour varies in different cultures. Consumers are likely to seek others opinions to reduce their search and effort for buying new products. Researchers have stressed the need for studies in the context of protecting the environment and consumer behaviour. Environmental factors include Retail Environment, Marketing, Shelf Space, Product Availability, Brand, Packaging and Labeling, Social values / Subjective Norm, Social Influences / Peer, Demographic factors (gender, age education), Government Initiative and Legislation. Therefore, it is important to understand the different factors affecting green consumer behaviour.

Review of literature

Rapid economic growth and resulting overconsumption have accelerated environmental deterioration worldwide, prompting escalated consumption-related environmental concerns. The world has a fixed amount of natural resources, some of which are already depleted or ruined. The risks to human health are great. Therefore, the need of the hour is that every consumer is made to think green. There are multiple lines of thinking as far as Environment and Green Consumer Behaviour is concerned. It depends on environmental attitude, environmental concern, lifestyles, generational approach; various demographic variables, motivators so on and so forth. Several researchers have studied and tried to
understand the environmental factors affecting
green consumer behaviour. Which are listed below:

Retail Environment: In the past, retailers used to
enter smaller, prosperous markets as well as large
ones but usually doing what other big brands were
doing once dominated big box retailers has now
opened up to a great variety of specialty retailers
(Sharma, 2017). International retailers are also focus-
ing on tackling the individual challenges of markets,
which require different strategies for success.

Marketing: Furthermore, Bukhari (2011) proposed
that this type of marketing allows companies to ac-
cept new markets as well as giving businesses a
competitive edge. The green marketing mix encom-
passes product development and the implementa-
tion of pricing, promotional, and distribution strat-
egies specifically designed to promote and preserve
environmental welfare.

Shelf Space: After so many years the emphasis of
shelf space and product assortment models has
been shifted towards an integrated category man-
agement optimization model. Ramaseshan et al.
(2009) stated that now retailers have to make num-
ber of decisions like what kind of products need to
stock on the shelf (assortment decisions), the num-
ber of facings to allocate to each product (shelf space
allocation decision), the level of ordering and the
frequency of assortment evaluation or review.

Product Availability: Mostafa (2007) observed that
companies are generally selling the green products
under the premium tag. This premium tag leads to
the premium cost and hence, hampers the availabil-
ity spectrum of the product because small retailers
avoid storing the costly products. The more sales
can be generated if companies make sure the easy
and wide availability the green product.

Brand: A brand which can be a name, term, sign,
symbol, design, or combination of all of them which
is anticipated to identify the goods and services of
seller, to one seller, or group of sellers and to differ-
entiate them those of competitors’ (Kotler and
out that the country of origin is an essential cue for
consumers to evaluate unknown products. Prior
studies suggested that country of origin affects con-
sumers’ product evaluation and quality perceptions
(Lee et al., 2011). Parts of consumers’ brand know-
ledge are derived from the countries where the pro-
ducts were manufactured, design or other brand-re-
lated characteristics.

Packaging and Labeling: Draskovic et al. (2009)
anticipated that packaging is a communication tool
between businesses and consumers and it is capable
of attracting consumers’ attention. Packaging,
shape, size, colour, materials, and labelled informa-
tion is the overall perception a consumer look after
the product. It is important to investigate how con-
sumers perceive packaging and understand how
packaging communicates and affects consumers
buying behaviour.

Social values / Subjective Norm: Subjective/social
norms can influence behaviour as they may exert
pressure on an individual to act in a certain way
(Gupta and Ogden, 2009). However, two studies re-
ported a negative relationship between reference
groups and individual green purchase behaviour
(Connell, 2010).

Social Influences/ Peer: Schiffman and Kanuk
(2007) explored that researchers and marketers are
interested to work on normative reference groups
and comparative reference groups, parents, co-
workers, teachers, and peers who provide the indi-
vidual with norms, values, and attitudes through
direct interaction which are parts of normative re-
ference groups. Comparative reference groups have
been defined as sports heroes and entertainment fig-
ures that provide standards.

Demographic factors (gender, age education): 
Demographics which generally refers to consumer’s
personal attributes such as age, income and educa-
 tion level. Sinnappan et al. (2011) resulted that con-
sumers buying behaviour towards green products
has no impact with the race group. Generally, green
consumer behaviour has always been perceived to
have a positive relation with the income due to the
generic assumption that most of the environmental
products comes with the higher prices than the con-
vventional one (Awad, 2011).

Government Initiative and Legislation: Legisla-
tion and Government Initiative is the role model to
all people in the country. Tan and Lau (2010) indi-
cated that Malaysian government has implemented
various strategies for sustainable consumption and
development. Malaysia government initiated poli-
cies such as, providing incentives, increasing green
product production and manufacturing, encouraging
green behaviour, car-pooling or green products
purchasing etc in order to enhance environmental
sustainability.

The review on environmental factors affecting
green consumer behaviour indicates that a large number of researches to study on the green consumer behaviour have been done; the review also indicates that the environmental factors are varying widely due to region, time and other reasons. Many researchers have done on green marketing, branding, labeling and demographical and subjective norms, legislatives etc, which states that going green is very important in the present scenario.

**Methodology**

To meet the objectives of the study, the subjects were contacted from the four directions of Udaipur city. Data collection was done by the investigator personally. Data regarding respondents' family background and green consumer behavior was collected, using the tools developed for the purpose. The data on background information, green consumer behaviour was put to suitable analysis, to be precise, frequency and percentages, t-test and correlation analysis to draw results.

**Results and Discussion**

Framing of items under the above mentioned sections were done through extensive research on literature during scale development to refine wording and content. To assure face or content validity, items were generated from different sources including consultation with experts in the field, proposed respondents and review of associated literature. In addition, a key strategy at this stage was that the researcher focused on re-examining the research questions frequently and to ensure that items reflect what is intended and relevant so that no item remains irrelevant. Keeping all these things in mind, an initial list of total 236 items were framed, 94 environmental antecedents was made. List of the Environmental Antecedents effects on the Green Consumer Behaviour:

The items were converted into the form of statements which shows environmental factors such as Retail Environment, Marketing, Shelf Space, Product Availability, Brand, Packaging and Labeling, Social values / Subjective Norm, Social Influences/ Peer, Demographic factors (gender, age education), Government Initiative and Legislation etc. The items with higher ‘t’–values (more than 1.75) were retained and rests were dropped. Finally, a total of 30 items for environmental section were retained for scale construction. Reliability and Validity score of environmental section it came to be 0.822042 and 0.906666. Thus to conclude environmental factors does have impact on the purchasing behaviour of the consumer.

![Fig. 1. Environmental antecedents](image-url)
Conclusion

Knowing the factors that consciously or unconsciously affect the decision to purchase green products can have positive effects on the consumption with better products as well as protecting the environment. So in an effort to study all these factors combinely, the present work was on development of antecedents of green consumer behaviour scale to assess green or pro-environmental behaviour was to protect the environment and support sustainable living in developing country.

References


