

**FACTORS INFLUENCE CONSUMER'S GREEN PURCHASING
BEHAVIOR: A LITERATURE REVIEW**

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ABSTRACT

With the rising of the industrial sector in India many issues that are related with the environment has been arising. Nowadays, it's a challenge for the people to keep the environment safe. Thus consumers are showing their concern and interest in the environmental problem and have started preferring the products that are environmental friendly. Thus with the increase in the importance of these green products the interest has risen to analyzed the factors that can influence consumers' green purchasing behavior. Therefore, in this study we have examined the existing literature in order to explore the various significant variables that affect the purchase intention of the consumers for the green products and to find the gap in the existing literature. The study is based on the secondary data and it is observed that are many internal and external factors which determine the buying behavior of the consumers towards green product.

Keywords : Sustainability, Green product, customer's buying behavior

Introduction

From the time the industrialization took place, man has been accused of ruining the environment. Humans have been cutting down the trees indiscriminately to create land for farming and housing, killing large number of birds and animals for their skins. Air pollution is also increasing by the burning of fuels this has in turn reflected in the major calamities that we are facing today. The famines (The Great famine of Bengal 1942-43.) and floods (Uttarakhand flood 2013, Himalayan flash floods 2012, Ladakh floods 2010 and many more) or the melting of the glaciers (World sea-level is expected to rise through this) are some of the examples of human carelessness. However it has become the need of the time to focus on what can be done to tackle this situation and focus on building a sustainable world. In this era of globalization,

Environmental pollution is a buzz word in today's business environment. Consumers have also become concerned with environmental problems like, global warming and the impact of environmental pollution and started demanding eco-friendly products especially in developing countries. As society becomes more concerned with the natural environment, businesses have also begun to modify their behavior in an attempt to address the society's concerns and has started adopting the new concept i.e. Green Marketing. With an increase in demand for green products, many business firms has turned green and started practising the green marketing strategies. So green marketing is a phenomenon which has been developing in the modern Indian market as an important concept and also in other developing and developed world.

So now what is Green marketing? Unfortunately, a majority of people believe that green marketing refers solely to the promotion or advertising of products with environmental characteristics but it is much wider concept. Green marketing is also termed as environmental marketing or ecological marketing. According to American Marketing Association Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Thus green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising.

So the rise of green consumerism has opened the door of new research in this vast area. Although a variety of research on green marketing has been conducted across the globe but a little research on consumer perception and preferences has been carried out in India. Therefore, in this study we have examined the existing literature in order to explore the various significant variables that affect the purchase intention of the consumers for the green products and to find the gap in the existing literature. The study is based on the secondary data and it is observed that are many internal and external factors which determine the buying behavior of the consumers towards green product.

Review of Literature

Wahid, Rahbar and Shyan (2011) In their study around seven factors were studied, these are social influence, self-identity, ecological affect, environmental label, environmental knowledge, environmental attitude and environmental concern .These factors were tested and data is

collected from 300 respondents from Penang state. The finding of the study suggested that social influence is the most significant factor that affects the green purchase behavior of the consumers, lined with the environmental concern and next important factor is green product knowledge, environmental knowledge and last but not the least the environmental label.

Nizam , Mansor , Mukapit & Yahaya (2011) reported that there are four factors that can influence the customers' green purchase decision . To get the result a sample of 360 individuals from Malaysia are taken and the finding of these study reveals that the environment benefits of green products is the significant factor which can influence the buying decision, next to it is the cost factor that can also remake the intention of the consumer.

Larsson and Khan (2012) This is very important study that is carried out in Sweden and data is collected from 150 respondents regarding the five factors that influence their behavior of eco-products. These five factors are Eco Knowledge, Eco motivation, self-space, price, peer group and gender. The test were applied and results show that the eco-motivation and shelf space induces the people to buy green product. Though eco knowledge raises the customers' interest in green products but it does not mean that people actually buy the green product. Other factor like price and gender are important factor that can affect the choice of people. Even the peer influence also did not influence the buying decision of customer in this study.

Pandey & Sunaina R. (2012) In their study they administered 97 respondents and analysed the variables directly influencing green purchase behavior and the result suggest that the influence of Collectivism (Ecological Consciousness) and Environmental Concern (Environmental sustainability) are the most important determinants of green buying behavior. These are the two important motivators which can influence the purchase decision of the green consumers.

Agyeman (2012) This study also add on to the knowledge about the green marketing. It also explores the impact of consumers buying behavior towards the green product. For the study convenience sampling method was used and sample size of 200 respondents was selected from Kancheepuram District. The result suggested that consumers are price sensitive as with the

increase in the price customers reduces their purchase of green product. Study also reveals that environmental concern and quality are also the key factors that influence the behavior of the consumers.

Morel and Kwakye (2012) They conducted important study considering 200 respondents from Sweden and states that “satisfaction goes with purchase intention” that is previous purchase experience will lead to repeat the purchase decision in future. Word of mouth and advertisement are also considered as important factors that can influence the purchase intention of green consumers. The study also proved that there is a significant difference between the women and men as women buy more eco-friendly product than men. Price is again important factor as consumers are ready to pay high price for green product and older people are more eager to pay high price than the younger people. Considering the age factor, people who are above 55yrs buy more units of green products than between age group of (18-24) and (25-35) yrs. Income also influences the decision as people with high income ready to buy more green products than low income group people.

Iravania, Zadehb, Foroziac, Shafaruddind, and Mahroeian (2012) Finding of their research are variables like consumer belief, social influence, environmental attitude, and perceived quality of green product positively influence the green purchasing intention of young Malaysian consumers. Sample of 310 individuals were collected. Higher the quality of the green product more will be the people tend to buy the green product. Therefore, it is suggested by the researcher that to retain the consumers the companies should developed the quality of their eco-friendly product.

Thakur and Gupta (2012) This study has divided the variables into individual factor and the external factors. The individual factors considered in the research are income level, environmental concern and price sensitivity of customers for buying green product and the external factors are economy, technology, product attributes and laws. The population consists of Bhopal region and the results stated that individual factors are the most important factors

influencing the customer green purchases. There is also exists a significant correlation between income level and the willingness to pay.

Vazifehdousta, Taleghanib, Esmailpourc, Nazaric And Khadang (2013) analyzed the sample of 374 respondents from Guilan province in Iran. Result of his study shows that out of the following factors- Environmental knowledge, Environmental concern and perceived innovation characteristics only the factor that can contribute or influence the attitude of the people is the consumer's environmental concern. This is the only factor that can change the perception of the people regarding the environment and lead to buy more green product.

Gupta and Abbas (2013) their study explore Delhi- NCR and Gorakhpur region and also determine the five variables (i.e. gender, age, marital status, qualification, income) that can influence the green purchase decision. Outcome of the study was only 63.5% of respondent were aware of the green marketing concept rest were unaware. Age factor is important factor that influence the customer behavior those who are older have less acceptable attitude than the younger people who easily favor the green products. Other interesting finding is higher income group person gives less importance to environmental concern that the poor or middle income group people.

Ansar (2013) The study is on 384 individuals of Karachi, Pakistan and under this four different variables are determined that influence green buying behavior and the outcome of this study is we can see a significant difference between male and female regarding green buying behavior also age is not the factor that affect the purchase decision. So according to the research demographic variable do not influence green purchase intention. Study also proves that the environmental advertisement and ecological packaging has a positive impact on the buying behavior of people.

Khare, Mukerjee, Goyal, (2013) The study examined the influence of collective self-esteem, normative values, and social influence on the green purchase behavior of Indian consumers. To conduct the study data was collected from 6 metropolitan cities and the result of the study reveals

that the demographic factors do not influence the customers to buy green product. But the social group can influence the buying decision.

Bhatia and Jain (2013) A study was conducted on 106 respondents and five different factors were picked up by the researcher and the result are it was found that gender does not affect the green values of the people. The qualification variable of the customers does not affect the purchase intention of green customers. It has also seen that the purchase intention of green product is dependent on the green values of the customers.

Cohn and Vaccaro (2013) examined whether the cultural and personal values factors (time and money) influences the purchase decision of green products. For this study a qualitative method was used and the data is collected from 348 respondents online. Finding of the study suggests that cultural and the personal value factors contribute to the customer satisfaction that the cultural factor affects the purchase decision of the green consumers.

Rajput, Kaura, and Khanna (2014) study the factors which influence the purchase decision of eco-friendly products in FMCG sector. A quantitative research design were used that consist of data collection of 400 respondents belongs to Delhi. According to the research done the past experience of customers i.e. satisfaction which they get from the previous purchase of green product does affect the buying behavior of the people, Next is the promotional tools and the word of mouth by friends, relatives or peers can also influence the buying decision regarding green product. The result also proves that apart from these factors other factors do not significantly influence the buying intention of the consumers. Variable like Product quality does not affect the green purchase decision. Considering the price factor, the study shows that the consumers are ready to pay more for the green products.

Other factor is “easy availability of environment friendly product” – this factor doesn’t influence the customers to buy green products even if they are available nearby.

G. Suresh (2014) In their study they review the green marketing literature and investigate the constructive factors that influence the purchase intention of green consumers. For the completion of the research, he collected the data from 100 respondents in Tamil Nadu region and the result shows that the parameter which make green product more in demand are (in order): Affordable Price (despite of high price consumers are preferring the green product) and the customer's inner satisfaction which they get from buying green products, through promotional offers and the easy availability of the green products.

Mariamammal and Shunmugavalli (2014) This study is carried out in Thoothukudi on 130 consumers and four factors were analyzed consist of consumer belief, environmental attitude, social influence and quality of green product. And it is found that consumer belief, environmental attitude and social influence have an actual influence on the green purchase buying behavior. Social influence by peer group or friends can help in molding the decision of consumer. Another factor in the study discussed is marital status and education qualification and it is seen that green purchase behavior is not influenced by marital status and education qualification.

Kianpour, Anvari, Jusoh and Othman (2014) the finding of this study are that environmental concern ,perceived effectiveness ,consumer knowledge, laws and regulations and promotional tools were the most important motivators and it influences the purchase decision. Sample size of 367 students was collected from Malaysia and the results are reference group is not the dominating factor in motivating the customer for buying green product. On the other hand Environmental concern, perceived effectiveness ,consumer knowledge are the most important factors for buying eco-friendly product. Last but not the least promotional tools are also important one.

Barge , More and Bhola (2014) On the basis of the research, it can be concluded that younger age group people have good awareness level about environmental issue and environmental practice but it does not result into force them to buy the green product on the other hand the middle age group show more environmental friendly behavior.

Gandhi and Solanki (2015) the objective of the study was to analyze the attitude of customers and for this 150 respondents were selected from Rajkot city and data analysis has been done. The findings are customers did show an interest in environmental issue or customers are more environmental concern these days. Gender does not have a significant impact on the green buying behavior but the level of education has a positive impact on the people regarding the green product purchase intention.

Conclusion / Summary

The objective of the study was to explore the major determinants that influence the purchase intention of the consumers regarding the green product. For the analyses, we have observed and reviewed the secondary source of information. The study has revealed that a set of internal as well as external factors affect the buying behavior of the people. It is found that the factors that can influence the buying behavior of the people towards eco-friendly products are : social influence, self-identity, ecological affect, environmental label, environmental knowledge, environmental attitude, environmental concern, environment benefits, Eco motivation, self-space, price, peer group , gender, marital status, qualification, income, age group, consumer belief, Collectivism , cultural , personal value factors, perceived innovation characteristics , quality of the product, word of mouth ,advertisement, economy, technology, product attributes , laws, satisfaction and easy availability of the product. Thus with the analysis of existing literature, few limitations of the studies are arises or we can say that a research gap is seen which can be filled by the further advance research on the topic considering following points:

- The sample size- As we have observed that sample size is almost the big constraint in the research. We can see that the researchers have selected the sample size of 100, 200, 300 or maximum 356 respondents. So the result came from the selected sample size are difficult to impose on the population as a whole. So further research can focus on study that consist of larger sample size i.e. more than 400 respondents.

- Variables – limited number of variables are studied by the researchers. As we can see in the research papers that the researchers has selected maximum 5 -8 variables in their study. So a further research can be conducted that consist of more than 8 variables that can influence the buying behavior of green consumers. It is also found that the variables that are analysed by the researchers are : social influence, self-identity, ecological affect, environmental label, environmental knowledge, environmental attitude, environmental concern, environment benefits, Eco motivation, self-space, price, peer group , gender, marital status, qualification, income, age group, consumer belief, Collectivism , cultural , personal value factors, perceived innovation characteristics , quality of the product, word of mouth ,advertisement, economy, technology, product attributes , laws, satisfaction and easy availability of the product. So the factors that are not studied can be taken for further research like very less research is conducted on the law or government role/effort as a motivator of influencing green product, corporate social responsibility can also be considered for next level research, other demographic factors can also be tested .
- It is also observed that out of these 20 research paper 10 studies are conducted in foreign land,so only 50% of the research is carried out in India so there is a need to do more research in the field of green marketing in India and the left out factors have to be analyzed considering the Indian population in the sample.
- Difference can also be seen that only one state or one city is selected by large researchers for their study. So an effort can be made to select more than one city or more than one state and then sample mean should be tested of these samples or the comparison have to be made between the different cities population towards the green buying behavior.
- Sampling technique- we can also notice that most of the researchers have used the convenience sampling which is not the appropriate method as the result we can get from this can be the bias one.

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