

## **PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL PRODUCTS: MARKETING INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER PURCHASE DECISION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The basic objective of this paper is to find out if marketing of green products can help people to go green and to find out the gap between people's green believes and behaviors in an environment where environment friendly products are increasingly available. The study shows a significant correlation between consumer's general environmental beliefs and consumer confidence in green products but there is no correlation found between general environment belief and consumer behavior which shows a value-action gap. It also reveals that marketing of green products is not affective as to make people aware about them but it is found that people will prefer products of companies that are environment friendly and have good image in this regard.*

**Keywords:** Environmental Management, Beliefs, Consumer Behavior, Trust, Green Marketing, Brands

## **INTRODUCTION**

The investigation on the environmentally stable products shows that the performance of the product is perceived to be a significant barrier in the process of their selection. For example, (Ottman, 1998) shows that about forty one percent consumers “Does not buy green products” because inferiority is perceived about them, citing the specifications of the product such as, use of recycling and biodegradable behavior by Roper Starch Worldwide (RSW). The consumers are near to accept the green products when needs that are primary in nature such as convenience, quality, affordability and performance are met. When consumer understand how their environmental problems can be tackled then their acceptance level increases (Ottman, 1998). The companies that claims to have environmental friendly processes of manufacturing and marketing has been increased rapidly (Winski, 1991). For the survival of much business, it is essential policy to become green. The initial start up may come from the following three perspectives: values, marketing, and legislation (Gummesson, 1993). Pro-environmental behaviors are viewed but researchers in two ways, first is behaviors motivated by desirable outcomes (e.g. de Groot and Steg, 2007; Kaiser et al.,1999) or second is pro-social behaviors (e.g. (Ohtomo, 2007); (Stern, (2000))).However, consumers can be segregated into two segments in accordance to their involvement in green consumerism:

- (1) Green product purchasers
- (2) Green product non-purchasers.

Green product purchasers are the consumers who intentionally purchase products that are recycled or foods that is organically grown while green product non-purchasers are the consumers who are currently not buying green products/services. These types show the belief, attitudes and behavior of consumer in several ways when research on pro-environmental behavior has been demonstrated. Consumers with pro-environmental beliefs are more pro-social and hold more pro-environmental values (Stern et al., 1995)and they are open to change (Stern et al., 1995).

Consumer attitudes towards environmental friendly products and their buying decision can be influenced through marketing?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

### **Consumer beliefs and behavior:**

According to the (Hoyer, 2004) , consumer's values and belief are very important while we check its influence that affects purchasing decision. Values are those beliefs that a given behavior is good or not and also include valuing the environment. Environment values are very important in pro-environmental behavior, values effect beliefs then it effect on personal norms which lead to pro-environment behavior of consumer (Reser, 2005), (Stern, (2000). (Ajzen I. , (1991),) theory of planned behavior tell that beliefs from attitude to behavior, which is translated into behavior's intention. The global environmental survey (GOES) finds that value shift in the post-war generation results in high pro-environmental behavior (Bennulf, (1990), 1990; (Betz, (1990); (Hoffmann-Martinot, (1991)); (Inglehart, (1990)).so, this is not necessary that the individual who has some interest in the welfare of environment does not spend their earning in the green products. It is called Value –action gap. (Kollmuss, 2002) has explored a great range of those factors including internally and externally that promote pro-environment behavior and found the competing and conflicting factors which relate to daily decisions of consumers. The findings of their study are only one single definitive model does not elaborate gap between pro-environmental behavior and knowledge of behavior.

### **Determinants of green consumer behaviors**

**Values, beliefs and norms:** Attitudinal factors comprise values, beliefs and norms, which direct the general inclination to act with pro environmental purpose, saying by (Stern, (2000).

**Habits:** Behavior changes is all about leaving old habits behind and developing new habits in you. One study of Dahlstrand and Biel in 1997 says that habit behavior changes says the same, market purchasing behavior greatly depends upon the habits of end users/consumers and same as with green, in which there is no surety about same behavioral sphere

**Personal capabilities:** Knowledge and specific skills needed for certain action includes in Personal Capabilities. It also carries time we have to act upon, general capabilities and resourced such as literacy, money, social status and power.

### **Consumer response to marketing of being pro-environmental**

A new segment of consumers is now emerged in the international market, consumers who are well aware and concerned with environmental issues that is green or ecological consumers (Nordlund, (2010)) . These consumers accept the green products when their primary needs are fulfilled as performance, quality, affordability and convenience. Their level of acceptance is also increased when they realize how a green product can help to solve environmental problems (Ohotomo, 2007). So it can be concluded that marketers should try to change consumer's attitude as a result change in their decision making and behavior.

H2. Consumers will likely purchase more from manufacturers that are seen to be pro-environmental.

### **Trust in the Product**

The most influential thing is word-of- mouth that mainly determines the purchase of food and household products. Authors like (Hoyer, 2004) present their view point that word of mouth influence more towards brand switching than any other sale assistants. It is so affecting that it can be harmful, if it is negative. For pre-environmental behavior, there is another factor known is

ecological consciousness. This new factor recognized by Schegelmilch and Bohhlen in 1996 and same points by Mostafa in 2007.

H3. Consumers will trust well-known products and will judge green products based on previous experience or word-of-mouth.

### ***Consumer Exposure to Product Marketing Communication***

The average consumer has very low rate of opportunity to establish a thought about a green product rather than about a conventional product, unless they have knowledge about the green product, as manufacturers or producers of the products that are environmentally improved often show or communicate less or claims nothing like this in their advertising campaigns. (Rand Corporation, 2004) One of another factor that is shown in the literature review to be important and have much impact on the relationship between environmental knowledge, behavior and attitude is known as perceived behavioral control (PBC). This variable explains the level to which the consumer believes that in preservation of the environment his contributions may be effective. Consumers having high perceived behavioral control have more intense environmental behavior (de Pelsmacker et al., 2002).

H4a. Consumers are unlikely to be exposed to communications about green consumer products.

H4b. Better market communication will induce consumers to purchase green.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Environmentally sustainable products cannot be defined easily. Firmly saying, all the products we purchase, own, discard or use have a bad impact on environment at some stage of in their lifespan, so we can conclude that there is no truly sustainable or green product. However, according to degree impacts products can be categorized and a quality can be drawn (Cooper, (2000)). A product having low environmental impact, is known as an environmentally sustainable product. Another

definition of green product in this paper, is that products supplied by the companies having reputation for reducing environmental impacts from their production cycle and should be readily available for purchase.

### **Samples**

The type of consumer chosen for this study was some students, job holders and a few businessmen both the male and female. A sample of 126 people was obtained randomly, with an age range of 19 to 50.

### **Data analysis methods**

In order to conduct the scatter diagram and regression analysis, the responses were converted in a standardized numerical data form, to identify correlations. The information for each individual and each question was collated and the mean average score (maximum 4) was calculated for each question and each group of questions.

According to the following criteria results were sorted:

- Strength of environmental beliefs (general environmental behavior and environmental beliefs).
- Belief in the performance of green brands.
- Choosing goods manufactured by companies making environmental improvements.
- Trust in well-known brands.
- Age group.

To test for significant correlations, scatter diagrams and regression statistics were generated.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Beliefs and behaviors**

The scatter diagram and regression analysis results show that environmental behaviors are not significantly affected by environmental beliefs. According to the results, there is a huge gap between environmental beliefs and environmental behaviors so we fail to reject the Hypothesis 1 that there is a gap between consumer beliefs and behaviors in green consumption. Product performance beliefs on the other hand, were shown to be significantly affected by environmental beliefs, according to the correlation results.

**Table 1 Correlation matrix**

	1	2	3
General environmental beliefs	1		
Green gauge past environmental behavior	-.164	1	
Consumer product	.365**	-.0251	1

**1:**The Pearson R of general environment beliefs and green gauge past environment behavior is -.164 and the level of significance is .066 which is greater than 0.05 so there is no correlation between them. And we fail to reject H<sub>1</sub>.

**2:** The Pearson r of general environment beliefs and the consumer product is .365\*\* with the level of significance 0.00 which is less than 0.05 so there is highly significant correlation between these two variables.

3: The Pearson R of green gauge past environmental behavior and consumer product is -0.025 and the level of significance is 0.785 which is greater than 0.05 which means there is no correlation in these variables.

**Table 2 Regression statistics**

Multiple R	.164
R square	.027
Adjusted R square	.019
Standard error	.58913
observations	126

**Table 3 Regress matrices**

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.011	.251		12.009	.000
	general environmental belief	-.221	.119	-.164	-1.857	.066
a. Dependent Variable: past environmental behavior						

P-values.066 so we conclude that  $\beta$  is zero

Green behavior is not significantly affected by environmental belief

**Table 4 Regression statistics**

Multiple R	.365
R square	.133
Adjusted R square	.126
Standard error	.38273
observations	126

**Table 5 Regress coefficients**

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.401	.163		8.604	.000
	general enviromental belief	.338	.077	.365	4.365	.000
a. Dependent Variable: consumer product behavior and attitude						

P.value is 0.000 thus we conclude that  $\beta$  is nonzero

Therefore green product performance is significantly affected by environmental belief.

## **DISCUSSION**

According to the results of our survey more respondent choose that brand which they have information that they are manufactured by companies which have more green products. More than half of the respondents agree to purchase the brand of these companies. Respondent also replied that they feel very good after purchasing these products because it damages the environment less. This support our H2 that is consumer will purchase more from the companies because of their CSR. The purchase of brand which is manufactured by companies which produce more environment friendly product enhance self-concept which is desired and it also allow consumer to feel good about it.

The majority of the respondent agrees that they do not trust the brand which is well established and famous brands. The minority of respondent agree with the statement are not identified as group in survey. "Marketers seek to favorably influence consumers' attitudes towards a given brand; considering the time, money and effort that is invested, this score seems disappointing. "Some respondent trusted some brand while not other. The perceived risk that whether the product will performance will be same as expected is normally very low for well-established and famous brand. The more consumers have the positive feelings about the product the higher the consumption will be and vice versa. In our survey there is no correlation between the respondent environmental beliefs and the beliefs that green product's performance is same as the non-green products. The Pearson R of general environment beliefs and green gauge past environment behavior is -.164 and the level of significance is .066 which is greater than 0.05 so there is no correlation between them.

Many of the respondents replied that they face little difficulty in identification of green product (0.5 out of 3), fairly difficult (2 Out of 3). Most environmentally concerned quartile tells us that they were relatively aware of green products phenomena and they found it mildly engaging and also relevant to their lifestyles. This result is not very surprising because now days it is targeted by

marketing strategies. Other three quartiles according to our survey, wireless known about green marketing. They reported that green products were not generally marketed in a way that particularly engaged them. Of the respondents, 58 per cent were those who were unable to name product and product type which is green product, on which their opinion about the performance might be based. But 42% of respondents named biodegradable products. Sample size chosen may influence this outcome. It is very unsurprising that 58% of the respondents did not name a product when attention to a stimulus that is necessary for information to be perceived is selective, divided and limited (Hoyer, 2004). So this support H4a. Respondents strongly agreed that they expected to be informed about new and improved product formulas and design they want to be aware of the clear benefits and how environmentally friendly products are.

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