

Does Awareness Make Consumers Green-A Study Of Green Consumer Durables

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Abstract

Environment protection is the key issue with the consumers, manufacturers, policy makers because the development activities such as construction, transportation and manufacturing does not only lead to depletion of the resources but also leads to water, air and noise pollution. Companies are trying to make the consumes aware about the environment issues by designing and manufacturing green products. Green products or ecofriendly products are becoming popular now a days. Although consumes are becoming concerned about the of environment deterioration and are willing to pay more to buy green products but the empirical studies showed that environment conscious consumers rarely translate their green concern and attention in green buying behavior. This paper attempts to find the reasons or barriers that impede the green consumers to translate their green intension to green buying decision. Primary and secondary data have been used to analysis the consumer behavior for not translating their environment consciousness in to buying behavior.

Key Words: Green, Consciousness, barriers, environment and buying behavior

1. INTRODUCTION

Environment protection is a key issue with consumers, manufacturers, policy makers and cooperates because developmental activities such as construction, transportation and manufacturing does not deplete the resources but also leads to large amount of air, water and soil pollution. There are certain factors like Ozone layer destruction, climate changes and waste material affect the agricultural, human life and tourism activity. Environment degradation is the deterioration of the environment though the depletion of resources. In order to save the natural resources, companies are trying to shift their business from traditional manufacturing system to green manufacturing system. Promoting environment friendly products can set the business apart from the competitors, but also attract new customers who want to buy environment friendly products

The term “Green” or “Sustainable” alludes to item or administration or practice that take into consideration financial improvement while moderating for future ages Green Products that has less ecological effect and that is less averse to human wellbeing than the customary items. “A green item is characterized as an item that is produced utilizing dangerous free fixings and condition neighborly systems and which is confirmed by perceived association” (Gurau and Ranchhod, 2005). Products which are recyclable, environment friendly, do not pollute the environment and helps in eliminate the use of toxic substances, pollution and waste (Berggren et al., 2013). The products that are manufactured with green technology and cause no environment hazards (Bharti and Jain, 2013). These products are the manifestation of higher ethical standards and humanitarian consideration and green products will lead to make new social and ethical responsibilities and increased ecofriendly behavior. (Mazar and Zhong, 2010) Companies are offering wide range of products to their customers ranging from organic food to electronic cars and solar heaters. Green product become more acceptable when the products are affordable, accessible, well performed with quality and products also perceived to be able eliminate environment problems (Bing et al., 2011). The brand relationship into traits advantages and frames of mind ecological affiliations can be considered initially as qualities in that the purchaser utilizes these convictions in the item natural presentation to portray the brand. These

attributes can be considered as product-related (environmentally-friendly chemical composition) or non-product-related (beliefs in the possibility of packaging). (Keller, 1993). Green items are items that ensure that they are created in an increasingly natural benevolent way that negligible the effect of the earth instead of their non-green or customary counterparts. (Peter, 2011).

Green products and green consumers are becoming popular now a day. Green consumers are those who drive the consumer demand, which intum encourage the improvement in environment performance of many products and companies. Both consumers and marketers are becoming sensitive to the need of switching onto ecofriendly products and services. (Barari, 2012). Common attitude and beliefs of green consumers described by International Institute for sustainable Development is – commitment to green lifestyle, critical of own environment practices and impact, overstate their green behavior and lack of environment knowledge but keen to lean about environmental issues etc. (Ryan, 2006). Green consumers are those who are concerned about environment in their purchase decisions and activities believes that their purchase decision has an impact on environment (Shabani et. al, 2012). Consumer that are increasingly aware of and more concerned about the environmental issues are known as green consumers. (V. Soonthonsmai, 2007). Consumers are becoming greener by changing their behavior, often motivated by a concern for the environment, a desire to reduce exposure to contaminants or a desire to save money (Knooce, 2011). Consumers who are related to environmental issues sacrifice the excellent technical products because they are conscious about the negative impacts of products in environment. (Devi, 2012). Consumers are better informed about environment impact of the products as compare to previous time period and may ask the business to improve their environment performance (Mohd, 2015).

Although consumes are increasingly concerned about environment deterioration and more willing to buy green products but the empirical evidence showed that environment conscious consumers rarely translate green concern and intension in green buying behavior because of price and availability issues (Co-operative Bank, 2011), Expectation from green products is often hurt by the perception that such products are of low value and do not deliver on their environment promise (Yu Shan Chen, Ching-Husn-Chang, 2012). Consumers are always in dilemma while taking decision between product attributes and product greenness. they do not scarifies their desires only to be green (Yu Shan Chen, Ching-Husn-Chang, 2012). Many consumers a to green appeals but they react differently to appeals. A survey conducted by Roper in 2002 shows that only 15 percent of the consumers would be considered as pure green consumers when they make their purchase decision, majority of the consumers (50-60percent) are conscious about the environment but their positive attitude does not reflect in their purchase decision. (Lee, Asgari, and Siew, 2014).

1.2 Meaning of Green: According to American Marketing Association “Green Marketing is the marketing of the products that are presumed to be environmentally safe” (Agarwal and Goyal, 2012). “Set of all the activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchange intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occur, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment (Polonsky, 1994). Philosophy to “reduce, reuse and recycle”- reducing the environmental deterioration and energy consumption, increasing the repeated use a product and recycling the product for the development of new product. (Panday, 2011).

1.3 Environmentally Conscious Consumers: Consumers are becoming more environment conscious, Government and environmentalist encourages individuals to go green, consumers are becoming greener by changing the purchase behavior. Environmental behavior is influenced by a number of motivating factors like beliefs, values, knowledge culture and economic attributes. (Turner, et al., 2011). Consumers with income level, education level and are more concerned about their health are more interested in buying green Products (Phual et. al, 2011).

1.4 Consumer Durable Products: Approximately 61% of the consumer purchases the green electronic products because of the economic benefits of the product rather the environmental benefits of the products. (Huang, 2006). Consumer Decision making process of different types of the products white goods (such as fridge and washing machine), electronic goods (like tv and

computers), fast moving consumer goods (like household and food items) , green energy tariffs(like electronic and renewable resources) and tourism products and services depends upon different type of factor, like for small appliances brand is the most important factor and for energy tariffs price and brand are the secondary criteria.

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Objective:

Now a day's consumers are more aware of green products but they do not translate their green purchase intention in green purchase behavior. This study is conducted to explore the barriers that come in environment consciousness and environment purchase decision of the consumers and which is the most effective barrier that compels the consumers not to translate their green intension into green buying behavior.

2.2 Research Design: This research study was conducted in the urban areas of Jalandhar, Punjab. Data from 103 respondents was collected through structured questionnaire by using purposive sampling. Five major urban areas of the city were chosen. Sample unit includes male and female respondents who were at least graduate. Collected data was analyzed by using factor analysis through SPSS.

2.3 Research Problem: The research problem of the present research is “Does awareness make the consumers green- A study of consumer durables.”

2.4 Need of the Study: Over the years consumers has realized that their purchasing and consumption behavior is impacting the environment directly or indirectly. Although environment concern among the consumers is increasing, but all the green consumers are not green and do not tend to buy green products. (Nazani,1983). In spite of higher education and sufficient income level consumers are not buying green products. This study wills emphasis to find the reasons or barriers that impede the green consumers to translate their green intension to green buying decision.

3. Literature Review

(Ramirez. E, 2013) the adoption process of green consumer durable goods is very unpredictable. Consumers in some cases deny buying this product as the adoption of these products is complicated as consumers face many barriers to adopt and motivated by multiple factors. (G. Rezia, 2011). The intension of the consumer to purchases green products steadfast by clear perception and subjective norms like green movements and perceived behavioral control i.e. how much control a consumer has over a situation.

(Guglani,2014) The purchase behavior of green products cannot be changed unless there is a change in the perception of the consumer about the product because of the loyalty of the consumers. The buying behavior of the consumer depends that how much the consumers are aware or conscious about the environment. Consumer consciousness may impact the green purchase decision latter it may be influenced by the other moderating factors like price, quality and political actions etc. (Oberseder et al, 2011) Consumers generally perceives that the additional cost of buying green products leads to find the substitute products as compare to green products. (Mark et al, 2013) It is nevertheless important to perceive that green products are of good value, when it is compared with the price of the product. (Pierre et al,2005) Along with the price, packaging is the most influencing factor. Right kind of the packaging depicts the eco friendly values of the product. (Braimah, M, 2011) Despite of high level of interest the demand for green products is low worldwide. Consumers consider price and quality is most important as compare to environment. (Glieim and Lawson 2014) Beside the price of the product other obstacle in the consumption of green products is the quality, convenience in acquiring the green product and brand loyalty.

(Aggarwal, 2016) Urban consumers are becoming very conscious about the health and environment but their purchase decisions are not happening at the same pace. In India many

consumers view themselves as environmentalist but they do not translate their consciousness in purchase decision because of direct financial benefits, convenience and habits.

(Bray et.al, 2011) There are certain key factors like price sensitivity, personal experience ethical obligation, lack of information, Quality, Inertia and cynicism that may provide information that why ethical attitude may not result in ethical purchase. Only providing ethical information about the products and using moral appeals will not be enough to encourage the consumers to behave ethical some steps should be taken by the government to educate the consumers. (Eckhardt, 2010) There are three justifications economic rationalization, institutional dependency and developmental realism which can be treated as barrier in green ethical intention and green buying behavior. Economic rationalization means consumer wants maximum out of the value spent regardless of their values, institutional dependency shows that government bodies are responsible for environment.

(Cavaliere et al, 2014) Socio demographic relationship plays an important role in the choosing green products. Middle aged and higher educated people more prefer these products. While association between health and environment is because of the low conscious level of the consumer. Green products promotion needs to be educated. Consumer should be made aware of what makes the product environment friendly.

(K.Rajinder 2014) Consumers are unable to distinguish between rational and mixed attributes of the product while purchasing consumer durables. Consumer pays more attention to emotional content as compare to rational content. Continuous enforcement is required through energy efficient advertisement and educational demonstration to convert the green attention into green buying behavior.

4.Data Analysis

4.1 Awareness of Consumers regarding Green Products: Objective of the study was to know the level of awareness of the consumers. In order to check the level of the awareness some factors were taken, like awareness of benefits, companies offering, green logos, green products are recyclable, environmentally safe, price and discount etc.

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Aware of benefits of green products	3.61	1.087
Companies offer	3.32	1.165
Logos	3.20	1.097
Recyclable	3.40	1.191
Energy savers	3.64	1.018
Environmentally safe.	3.91	1.086
Price is higher that the ordinary products	3.78	.969
Discount on the ordinary products force me not to buy green products	3.02	1.066
Less promotional schemes	3.68	1.031
Quality of symbols/marks are not displayed on the product package.	2.99	1.176
Quality is good as compare to ordinary products	3.39	.962

Quality of the green product is measurable in terms of how much it is safe for the environment.	3.58	1.107
Lack of proper awareness of the green product	3.35	.987
Not advertised properly.	3.50	.999
Not properly displayed on the shelf	3.59	.933
Variety is not available	3.58	.924
Question mark on the performance of the green products	3.54	.826
Difficult to define and differentiate the green product from ordinary product.	3.77	.877
Labels do not provide complete information	3.43	1.035

As per the analysis most of the consumers are aware of that green products are safe for the environment (Mean value is 3.91, Standard Deviation 1.086) followed by that the price of the Green products is higher than the ordinary products (Mean value is 3.78). Consumer pay less attention to the symbols (Mean value is 2.99) that are being used for on the products to make them recognizable as green products. promotional schemes are very less on green products and if the discount is available on the ordinary product consumers switch over to that product (Mean value 2.03 and 3.68). Consumers do not buy the green products because companies do not advertise the product as the ordinary products are not advertised (Mean value 3.50). Very less variety is available (mean value is 3.58). Most of the consumer face difficulty in differentiation and defining the green product (Mean Value 3.77). Lastly the labels mentioned on the product package is not always compete.

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 1					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Aware of benefits of green products	24.389	102	.000	2.612	2.40	2.82
Companies offering	20.215	102	.000	2.320	2.09	2.55
Logos	20.3	102	.000	2.204	1.99	2.42
Recyclable	20.435	102	.000	2.398	2.17	2.63
Energy savers	26.327	102	.000	2.641	2.44	2.84
Environmentally safe.	27.229	102	.000	2.913	2.70	3.12

Awareness of benefits, companies offering green products, logos recyclability, energy saving feature and environment safety feature of green product does not restrict the consumers to buy Green Products as p value is less than 0.05, hence we have to reject the null hypothesis. Test value is 1.

4.2 Barriers in adoption of Green Products: This study was conducted to check the factors that restrict the consumers to buy green products. Major barriers like lack of awareness, lack proper advertisement, lack of availability of the products on shelves, less variety, question on the performance, problem in differentiating green products from ordinary products and incomplete information on the logos of green products.

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Lack of proper awareness	103	3.35	.987	.097
No proper advertisement	103	3.50	.999	.098
Not properly displayed on the shelves	103	3.59	.933	.092
Less variety	103	3.58	.924	.091
Question mark on the performance	103	3.54	.826	.081
Difficult to define and differentiate the green product from ordinary product	103	3.77	.877	.086
Labels do not provide complete information	103	3.43	1.035	.102

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 4					
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Lack of proper awareness	-6.687	102	.000	-.650	-.84	-.46
Not advertised properly	-5.031	102	.000	-.495	-.69	-.30

Not properly displayed on the shelves	-4.433	102	.000	-.408	-.59	-.23
Variety is not available t	-4.586	102	.000	-.417	-.60	-.24
Question mark on the performance	-5.608	102	.000	-.456	-.62	-.29
Difficult to define and differentiate the green product from ordinary product]	-2.697	102	.008	-.233	-.40	-.06
Labels of green products do not provide complete information	-5.618	102	.000	-.573	-.78	-.37

Most of the respondents feel that it is very difficult to differentiate the green products from the ordinary products (Mean value 3.77) as these products are not properly displayed on the shelves (mean value 3.59) and look alike the ordinary products because no different labeling is done on the Green products (Mean value 3.43). Due to less variety available consumers buy less of green products (Mean value is 3.58). Consumer have a doubt regarding the performance of the products whether they will perform properly as the ordinary products perform. (Mean value 3.54). p value is less than .05 by taking the test value as 4, so null hypothesis is rejected

Conclusion

Now this is the time to accept the green products as the study shows that the consumes are becoming more aware of the environmental benefits of green products as compare to the recyclable characters, discount on green, symbols of green products. Consumer are less aware of logos of green products. In spite of the increasing level of awareness, consumers are not buying green products because consumers are unable to differentiate ordinary products from green products and they feel green products are not properly displayed on the shelves. Companies are offering very less variety of green products. Consumers also feel the performance of green products is not up to the marks. In order to make the green products more in use and to save the environment, companies has to take the responsibilities, they have to reposition their marketing and selling strategies of their products. Government also need to take some steps so that the companies can rethink about product manufacturing, advertisement and product selling.

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