

Exploring the Influence of Customer Expectations and Perceptions in Green Shopping Decisions

S. Rengalakshmi¹, K. Ravindran²

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Abstract: "Green Products," "Sustainability," and "Environmental Friendly" are some of the buzzwords these days. Because of the worldwide concern, more research is being done on sustainable products. The basic definitions of green marketing and related ideas are discussed in this study. It explains how it has evolved. Overall, this focuses on the customer's view of green products and their diverse expectations while making green product purchases. Price, willingness to switch from an existing brand, nature of green products, environmental impact, usage and disposal, significant reasons to abandon conventional brands in favor of organic goods, and level of awareness are all important elements in influencing green shopping decisions. In this case, the demographic profile significantly impacts in the purchasing decision

Keywords: Green products, Environmental friendly, Sustainable products, Demographic profile, Conventional brands

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the word "green" is the most widely used term. People began to incorporate organic items into their daily lives. Consumers are becoming more environmentally conscious as their awareness of the environment grows. Although everyone is aware of this notion, it is gaining popularity due to its branding and the fact that the items have fewer negative effects. This concept is first framed in European countries and then gradually spreads worldwide. The government has taken many steps to promote this concept. The evolution of green business led to the emergence of green marketing (Lampe and Gazda 1995). The term "ecological marketing" was coined initially (in the year 2001). It is referred to as "Environmental green marketing" in the second stage (2001) and "Sustainable green marketing" in the third stage (2001). Green marketing is defined as those actions that have a significant impact on the natural environment. Previously, the words "green, greener, eco, ecological, sustainable and environmental" were intimately associated with green marketing. Consumers were classified by Ottman and Reilly (1998) according to their nature, such as

Contributions to environmental protection (Conservative customers, less dedicated consumers, loyal and green consumers)

Environmental concerns (Environmental protection, health-conscious individuals, and animal lovers)

Necessities (Control of information, adjustments in their routines, and a reduction in guilt feelings)

2. Review Of Literature

Rosa Maria Dangelico and Daniele Vocalelli (2017) in their paper "Green Marketing: An analysis of definitions, strategy steps, and tools through a systematic review of the literature" explained the

definitions of green marketing and related concepts, as well as their evolution. It also lays out the many phases of developing a green marketing plan. The aspects of nature or green marketing mix have been covered in this study. The data for this study were gathered from databases like ("EBSCO, Scopus, and Web of Science"), and 11 studies were brought from those sources. As a result, this article concluded that definitions of green marketing are evolving. Brand positioning is given precedence over green product positioning.

The following are some of the highlights of the collected papers: Customers are willing to pay a higher price for products with the following traits (product attributes and environmental contribution).

Environmental sustainability is also integrated into marketing. "Hennion and Kinnear (1976)" coined the term "green marketing" in their work.

"Fuller (1999)" provides a thorough definition. According to his observations, customers' requirements are addressed, and organizational goals are met through eco-systems.

Greenwashing ("Ross and Deck2011"), and Demarketing ("Kotler and Hevy1971"), are examples of new terminologies.

Praveen Balakrishnan Nair (2015) in his paper "Profiling Green Consumer Characteristics: An Eternal Quandary" Previous studies had attempted to profile the characteristics of green consumers. He concluded that characterizing their nature is difficult. According to the study customers, need not to be literate to make environmentally beneficial purchases. They frequently express an interest in purchasing green products. According to Pettie, people who buy organic items, are not necessarily concerned about the environment. They purchase for the sake of taste and health.

The key points of the study are as follows,

Variables related to demographics were discussed (Age Gender, Income, and Education.)

Socio- demographics determine the green consumer nature and produce no useful results.

¹ Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Krishnankoil – 626126, Tamilnadu, INDIA

² Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Krishnankoil – 626126, Tamilnadu, INDIA

* Corresponding Author Email: rengalakshmi@klu.ac.in

One of the most common variables is age, and young people are more concerned towards the environment.

According to gender, women respondents are concerned about the environment.

When it comes to the income element, wealthy people are more concerned. Furthermore, they perceive a tremendous environmental impact due to their purchasing habits.

Customers with a high level of education are well-informed about their purchases.

Mayank Bhatia and Amit Jain (2013) research entitled “Green Marketing: A Study of Consumer Perception and Preferences in India”. Their study discusses the level of consumer impression of marketing strategies and items. As a result, a high level of awareness was discovered. The importance of green values must also be recognized. Consumers who exercise green habits have a positive influence. The brand linked with environmentally friendly actions was also highlighted.

Highlights

Gender and academic qualification are the most commonly used factors in this study. The impacting elements are green values, purchase intentions, preference for green items, and green values. Consumers are unaware of government and non-government agencies’ initiatives.

Concerns about ozone depletion and global warming are more prevalent.

People think about the products’ availability and price.

Psychographic segmentation does not have a lot of potential for predicting their purchasing habits.

Joaõ Pedro Pereira Luzio and Fred Lemke (2013), in their paper “Exploring green consumers’ product demands and consumption processes”, “The case of Portuguese green consumers”. This article looked at customers’ desires for green products and how they are consumed. The writers of this article concluded that the evaluation factors for revealing consumer behavior, in businesses, have changed. The majority of green products have a lower commercial acceptance (Ottman 1998). Consumer needs and consumption processes are not met by all green products.

Denis Drexler, et al (2017), in paper “The Effect of Organic Food Labels on Consumer Attention” demonstrate how consumers feel about organic labelling. The authors conducted their investigation with the assistance of two groups (Experimental and Control groups). The eye-tracking method is applied in this case. The following are some notable findings:

The most significant element for consumers is the origin.

More than half of consumers buy organic items regularly.

According to the results of the eye tracking method, 27% of consumers are unconcerned about labeling.

The dependent variable is the experimental group.

Label certification and quality do not improve sales.

Maria Massey, Aron O’Cass and Petr Otaha (2017) “A meta-analytic study of the factors driving the purchase of organic food” revealed that the variables that inspire purchase decisions as “credence, search, and experience” based on prior research by (e.g., Gracia and de Magistris, 2008; Janssen & Hamm, 2012; Lee & Yun, 2015; Nessel et al., 2010). Credibility is important when it comes to purchasing organic foods. From the standpoint of organic sellers and producers, customer perception comprehension comes from experience, and credibility has the potential to provide a special selling proposition and point of uniqueness in the market. Markets are driven by the perceived advantages of organic goods over conventional foods. The findings reveal that no single

predictor that explains organic food consumption, instead a various perceived features appear to stimulate purchase.

3. Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is to know the customers’ expectations and perceptions towards green products.

4. Concepts Associated with Green Marketing

Greenwashing

It is a term used to describe a type of green product brainwashing (Ross & Deck). According to Delmas Burbano (2011), this was done because of the concept’s low environmental performance and positive communication. Simply said, it is “environmental advertising with no environmental content”.

Demarketing

In times of scarcity, it discourages the usage of certain items or goods (Kotler and Levy 2011). It is utilized to cut down on energy use and other bad habits.

Social marketing

Marketing techniques and concepts are to achieve specific social or public-benefit objectives. (National Social Marketing in the United Kingdom)

Green Brand

A brand that emphasizes the importance of the environment (Insch, 2011). Consumers are interested in purchasing items and services that are environmentally friendly.

Green Brand Positioning

Hatman, Apoalaza, and Forcada are all green brands (2005). Functional and emotional methods are the terms used to describe two types of approaches. The product features and benefits are presented in a functional style. The emotional method stimulates people’s minds by making them feel good about participation.

5. Methodology

The survey conducted among employees of various organizations. The responses were collected through the structured questionnaire. Totally, 93 respondents were received.

6. Results

Hypothesis framing:

H0 = There is no significant difference, between the mean rank of gender and customer perception.

Table 1

6.1 *Mann-Whitney Test*

Variables of Perception	Mean Rank		P value	Z Value
	Male	Female		
Eco-friendly products are good for the environment	44.25	49.39	1.141	.254
I feel that my purchasing behaviour is concerned with protecting the environment	45.86	46.27	.078	.938
Eco friendly products are healthy and have good	42.43	52.92	2.007	.045

quality/performance					
Eco friendly products have a better quality/performance than conventional products	46.58	44.87	.317	.751	
I understand the information and believe in eco-friendly packaging	46.49	45.05	.276	.783	
Overall Perception	44.95	48.03	.535	.593	

Interpretation:

According to table 1 the significant values are greater than 0.05. "Eco-friendly products are healthy and have a good quality/performance." (The p-value is 0.045). The null hypothesis is accepted as there is no difference between customers' perceptions and gender.

Table 2
6.2 Kruskal Wallis Test

Variables of Perception	Age Group				Chi Square Value	P Value
	18-24	25-34	35-44	Above 44		
Eco-friendly products are good for the environment	41.38	48.37	46.00	58.00	3.762	0.288
I feel that my purchasing behaviour is concerned with protecting the environment	42.59	48.14	35.93	68.00	5.593	0.133
Eco friendly products are healthy and have good quality/performance	44.35	46.14	47.07	56.50	0.970	0.808
Eco friendly products have a better quality/performance than conventional products	45.49	45.10	45.93	60.88	1.563	0.668
I understand the information and believe in eco-friendly packaging	43.22	46.13	52.64	56.50	1.811	0.612
Overall Perception	43.63	46.00	46.36	65.50	2.524	0.471

Interpretation

From the observation of table 2 the significant (P) values are greater than, 0.05. So, the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between the age group and the perception of customers.

Green products are familiar to over 75% of the respondents. In future, 51% of respondents will be more interested in eco-friendly

purchases. They also anticipate their purchasing habits to positively impact the environment. Consumers trust environmentally friendly packaging and its quality (52 percent). In this study, the demographic variable gender did not impact on customer perception. Regardless of gender, 38 percent of the respondents were willing to spend extra and switch from their current brand. There were also suggestions for changes in product features, pricing policies, and better quality and performance.

Understanding of green products	Preferring product varieties
Products that are natural and organic (79%)	Foodstuffs (69%)
Products that have been recycled (38%)	Products for health and wellness (42%)
Products that are vegetarian (35%)	Cosmetics are a type of cosmetics that are (25%)
Products that are good for you (46%)	Cleaning supplies (22%)
Herbal/Ayurvedic items (35%)	Products for the Home (34%)

7. Conclusion

Despite the fact that numerous studies are now underway, these notions still need further exploration. Behavioral and psychographic characteristics have been ineffective in analyzing the purchase patterns of consumers. Only product knowledge and awareness are insufficient indications to assess green consumers' character and consumption habits. Besides, there is a slew of unknown variables to be discovered.

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