



AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF GREEN PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR AMONG THE NEW AGE GROUP WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PATTUKOTTAI DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Payable to an accumulative Customer awareness in environmental effect, consumers are more sensitive towards green products when making their purchasing decisions. The New Age Group, who represents the future of our society, seems to have a different customer attitude and purchasing behaviour and belief which enables them to reflect on their choice of green products. This research empirically examines the influence of ecological affect and ecological knowledge on the green purchasing behaviour of the new age group. A survey was administered to new (young) customers between the age of 21 and 30. Structural equation modelling was applied to test the hypotheses. The analysis result confirms that the ecological effect and knowledge are significant in determining young customers' green involvement as well as their actual purchase behaviour.

Key words: Green products, Purchase behaviour, New Age Group, Ecological Cognition.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Today the environmental issue has become an important issue among hospitals as well as consumers. The environmental concern has led to an increase in consumers' demand for

environmentally friendly products. Hospitals have responded by introducing a variety of green initiatives such as green medical products and equipment. They can develop sustainable marketing strategies targeting these consumers. It is clear that the ways in which consumers choose goods and services have both direct and indirect effects on the environment [1][2]. The promotion of environmentally friendly and green purchase behaviour is one of the ways to minimize the environmental impact.

The concept of green purchasing is gaining increasing attention among academicians as well as practitioners. The increasing attention towards protection of the natural environment and environmental issue has changed the consumer purchasing preferences [8][9][10][11][12][13][14][15][16][17][18]. The green purchasing has expanded rapidly in the developed nations, but with time this concept is also getting its foothold in the developing nations such as Turkey. The present research has used the theory of planned behaviour framework to understand the consumers' behaviour towards purchasing green products in the different sectors. In the purpose of this study to evaluate a relationship between the healthcare personnel behaviour and purchase green products in Turkey. The analysis findings supported that the ecological awareness of healthcare personnel is substantial in the determination of hospital's purchasing decisions. The results show that there are a positive correlation between green purchase behaviour and environmentally friendly behaviour in public hospital [3].

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. Includes research design,[4] data collection and hypotheses are developed. Also, data analysis is presented including validity and reliability test and hypotheses testing. Discusses the analysis result and green purchasing implementation in hospital. Finally, we draw conclusions and highlight possible future work. Identifying knowledge, attitudes, and buying behaviours for green products is essential for companies and governments planning to develop appropriate policies and strategies to promote green purchase concern and behaviours.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Green purchasing can be defined as the purchasing of those products which are environmentally friendly and evading those products which are harmful to the environment. Furthermore, it is a green product, which fulfils consumers' needs without doing damage to the environment and contributes toward a sustainable world. The said products possess low environmental impact and are environmentally superior. According to Chen and Chai (2010), green products consume material which is safer to the environment, are also recyclable and need fewer packaging. A few models of green products are home-grown items, natural items, vitality proficient lights, eco-accommodating clothes washer and so forth. GPB is another important point to consider here.

Kaufmann *et al.* (2012) defines environmental knowledge (EK) as it is up to what level people know the environment with regard to how the product is produced, how a product affects the environment and how shared responsibility is essential for sustainable development. Customer knowledge of the Earth incorporates the nursery impact, squander administration, dangerous waste and reused materials [5].

Mostafa (2009) found an important relation between green consumer behaviour and EK. EK plays a multifaceted role in inducing the individual's behaviour. The possession of knowledge about the environment by consumers aids them in assessing consumers' green behaviour and proposing action strategies (Cheah and Phau, 2011) [6].

If a consumer possesses knowledge for the causes and their effects on the environment than their level of awareness will enhance and encourage a favourable attitude to green products

significantly. In addition, shoppers' environmental concern had the significant effect on their ability to pay for environmentally agreeable items (Xu *et al.*, 2020) [7].

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The Sample

The study recruited 150 undergraduate students, aged 21-30 years: 50% male and 50% female. Convenience sampling was used to collect the required data. Researching youth generation is considered valid because they account for about 73% of Pattukottai district population and represent the new generation of customers.

The Procedure of Data Collection

Personal interview using a specially designed questionnaire collected the research data.

Variable Specifications and Statistical Technique

The research paper used multiple regression analysis and correlation analysis to find the relationship between the green buying behaviour of the new age group customers (dependent variable) and three determinant factors (independent variables): environmental knowledge, environmental attitudes, and environmental concern.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The questionnaire used for data collection included 15 questions divided into three sections. The first sections measured the independent variables (knowledge, attitude, and concern); the second section measured the dependent variable (green buying behaviour). The first section measured young consumers' general knowledge about environmental matters. Respondents were to answer 7 questions using a scale of 1 = *Totally unaware*, 2 = *Somewhat aware*, and 3 = *Totally aware*.

The second section measured the young consumers' attitudes toward various environmental issues. This section included 8 questions using a five-degree Likert-Scale: 1 = *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*. The 8 attitude questions and their measurement instrument were adapted from a number of studies: two questions from Bohlen and Schlegelmilch (1993).

Table 1 Pearson Correlation (R) Analysis

Details	Environmental knowledge	Environmental attitudes	Purchasing Behaviour
Green purchasing behaviour			
Pearson correlation (r)	0.224	0.195	0.254
Significance	0.000	0.001	0.000
Degrees of freedom (df)	240	240	240

Table 2 Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	Standardized coefficient(beta)	t-value	Significance
Constant		0.685	0.494
Environmental knowledge	0.382	2.802	0.006
Environmental attitudes	0.206	2.273	0.024
Environmental concern	0.240	3.039	0.003
Adjusted R square = 0.104			
F value = 10.399			
Significance = 0.000			

Results in table 2 indicate that the correlation between respondents' green behaviour and each of the three independent variables is positive and statistically significant at 0.01 levels. This means that more knowledge, more positive attitudes, and more concern towards environment means more pro-environment buying behaviour.

The overall result for the regression model is statistically significant at 1% level with the F-value of 10.399. The results in table 3 also show that all independent variables are statistically significant at $< .05$ in determining the dependent variable. Furthermore, results of standardized beta revealed that, among the three independent variables, knowledge was the most important determining factor in shaping the green behaviour of the youth in Bahrain (beta = 0.382) followed by concern (beta = 0.240) then attitudes (beta = 0.206). The results of the regression analysis also revealed that only 10.4 percent of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the three independent variables (Adjusted R square = 0.104).

Information shown in tables 1 and 2 give full support to accept hypotheses 3, 5, and 7, as detailed below.

Correlation analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between environmental knowledge and green purchase behaviour at $< .01$ significance ($r = .224$, Sig = .000). Regression analysis indicated that environmental knowledge is an effective determinant factor in shaping green purchase behaviour (beta = .382, $t = 2.802$, Sig = .006). Therefore, hypothesis 3 is accepted. Environmental attitudes positively correlated with respondents' green purchase behaviour at $< .01$ significance ($r = .195$, Sig = .001). On the other hand, environmental attitude was found to have a noticeable role in determining green purchase behaviour (beta = .206, $t = 2.273$, Sig = .024). Therefore, hypothesis 5 is accepted. With regard to H7, findings revealed that the young peoples' environmental concern is positively associated with their green purchase behaviour at $< .01$ significance ($r = .254$, Sig = .000) and that such concern plays a significant role in shaping green purchase behavior of the youth (beta = .240, $t = 3.039$, Sig = .003). Therefore, hypothesis 7 is accepted.

5. FUTURE RESEARCH (LIMITATIONS)

- This research was conducted on one segment of the population: 21-30 year old undergraduate students. To increase the reliability and credibility of the results, similar research should study other segments of the population
- The positive association between environmental behaviour and the determinant variables (knowledge, attitudes, and purchasing behaviour) contradicts the results of many studies in the literature. Again, in order to assure the credibility of these results, similar studies should replicate this research with different segments of the population.
- This research relates to the environmental behaviour in general. Better results might be obtained if a specific behaviour or product were examined.
- This paper looked at the sample as a unified segment. Future research should examine the effect of sample demographics (age, gender, education, and income) on the association between antecedent factors (knowledge, attitude, and purchasing behaviour) and consumer environmental behaviour. For example, the literature indicates that some studies found differences in the environmental behaviour of males and females.
- This research examined three determinant factors (knowledge, attitude, and purchasing behaviour). It would be useful if additional parameters - religion, friends and relatives, affiliation, marital status, etc. - were examined.

6. CONCLUSION

This study examined four environmental factors of the new age group in Pattukottai district: environmental knowledge, consumer attitudes, and environmental purchasing behaviour. The findings of the study revealed that the new age group in the scored reasonable for attitude but low for behaviour. A strong positive relationship was found between the respondents' green behaviour and the three factors of knowledge, attitudes, and purchasing behaviour.

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