



Factors that Affect Green Purchase Behavior

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Abstract

Globally, there is a growing acceptance of environmentally friendly products. The present study aims to examine the scenario within the specific context of Bangladesh. Specifically, it examines the elements that influence of consumers' attitude and their purchasing behaviour. This research aims to comprehend the attitude, intention, and conduct of consumers by applying the idea of planned behaviour. This analysis investigates four elements that directly impact customer buying behaviour: attitude, local environmental awareness, peer influence, and expertise. The present investigation aims to examine and comprehend the buying patterns of environmentally friendly items among customers in Bangladesh. A quantitative technique has been employed in this investigation. Survey data was gathered from several supermarkets located in designated areas of Dhaka city.

Key words: Green purchase, environmental awareness, peer influence, friendly environment, planned behaviour, consumer behavior.

1.0 Introduction

The concept of green marketing is a recent addition to the field of management. This contemporary and widely embraced market trend promotes environmentally sustainable habitats for individuals, animals, and the earth (Rajeshkumar, 2012). Current customers possess a heightened level of environmental consciousness and perceive the preservation of the environment as not just the duty of the government, but also as their own obligation as consumers (Fraj & Martinez, 2007). This issue of the "environment," particularly the "green environment," became a vexing problem for marketers and gave rise to the concept of "green marketing". Firms have gradually implemented green marketing strategies in their initiatives as a means of fulfilling their social obligation and attempting to transmit environmentally friendly messages to their target audiences (Nagaraju & Thejaswini, 2014). Companies have



implemented green packaging initiatives by endorsing products that are both recyclable and adaptable for reuse. According to the renowned economist Lionel Robinson, all resources are finite while human desires are boundless. Therefore, making use of these scarce resources through green marketing is unavoidable. Over the latter part of the 1980s, the "green movement" originated in Great Britain and gradually expanded to other countries.

Green marketing refers to the promotion of environmentally friendly items that are either ecologically safe or do not pose any environmental risks. The field of green marketing encompasses several actions such as product modification, packaging, and advertising (Mishra & Sharma, 2010). Some studies have established a comparison between green marketing and holistic marketing. Holistic marketing encompasses all aspects of manufacture, promotion, use, and disposal of a product in an environmentally sustainable manner. In contemporary times, sustainable development has emerged as the most formidable problem. This problem is a significant challenge for developing countries because to their rapid annual population growth. According to Hart's research, the global population is growing by 90 million year and is projected to double during the next four decades (Hart, 1997). By developing an awareness of the repercussions of overpopulation, individuals become more environmentally concerned. The poll conducted by Dagnoli in 1991 revealed that 83% of American consumers expressed a preference for purchasing environmentally friendly products. A separate survey revealed that 23% of American consumers make purchases influenced by environmental factors (Joseph, 1991). Asian consumers are likewise displaying a growing awareness of ecological issues, similar to their western counterparts (Harris, 2010). Rapidly expanding economies in Asia have altered the pattern of consumption among financially empowered consumers who are now more inclined to spend a greater amount of money compared to earlier generations (Lee & Han, 2011).

The present study will examine the future purchasing behaviour of green products among customers in Bangladesh. The estimated population of Bangladesh, as reported by the World Bank in 2013, exceeds 157 million. An imminent and significant obstacle for Bangladesh in the next years is to effectively manage the issue of overpopulation by ensuring both food security and environmental preservation. Given the limited resources, such as land, it is challenging to supply the agricultural needs of this overpopulated people. In order to satisfy the consumer demand, farmers are resorting to the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, which are progressively causing environmental degradation. Furthermore, the consumer goods and commodities utilized in everyday life are neither environmentally beneficial nor



disposable. The recognition of this scenario has led to an increase in the demand for environmentally friendly or green products. At now, there is a limited availability of environmentally friendly products on the Bangladeshi market. The present study aims to identify the specific variables that influence green behaviour in the context of green product acquisition.

1.1 Research Gap

Numerous studies have been carried out in an attempt to comprehend how consumer behaviour is evolving. These studies aid worldwide firms in expanding their product lines by providing insight into the elements driving environmentally conscious behaviour and astute consumers. According to a 2012 survey conducted among 1000 Americans, 44% of respondents have confidence in the environmental claims made by companies. Conversely, 42% of the respondents choose to disregard environmental products due to their belief that the cost of these products is higher than that of conventional products (Cone Green Gap Trend Tracker, 2012, p. 1). So far, there has been no substantial formal study undertaken in Bangladesh to comprehend the environmentally friendly behaviour of Bangladeshi customers. This study aims to identify the key elements that significantly influence green behaviour. Research was necessary to comprehensively analyse the purchasing behaviour of Bangladeshi customers, as well as their attitudes, peer influence, and understanding of environmental concerns.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

- Identification of certain elements influencing the green purchasing behaviour of customers.
- Analyze the correlation between several indicators that impact the purchasing behaviour of environmentally friendly items.
- Determine which factors exert a greater influence on purchase behaviour and which ones lack such influence.
- Facilitate marketers in developing greater impactful green marketing strategies to shape consumer buying behaviour.

2.0 Literature Review

In recent years, the terms "green marketing" and "environmental marketing" have gained significant popularity. Green marketing initiatives have raised concerns among governments worldwide. For instance, in the United States, the Federal Trade Commission and the National



Association of Attorneys-General initiated thorough record analysis to identify green marketing concerns [FTC 1991, NAAG 1990]. Similarly, the UK government implemented 5000 pound subsidies as a means to encourage the sales of electric cars (BBC, 2009). This initiative is a component of the UK government's £250m strategy to encourage low carbon road mobility.

Alternative definitions of "green marketing" have been proposed by several scholars. An analysis outlined the wider dimensions of "green marketing". The scope of this effort encompasses product modification, alterations to the manufacturing process, packaging modifications, and advertising adjustments. The study noted that "green marketing" is commonly understood as the promotion or advertising of products that have environmental attributes, such as being Phosphate Free, Recyclable, Refillable, Ozone Friendly, and Environmentally Friendly (Polonsky, 1994). Many consumers are prioritizing the new aspect known as Corporate Social Responsibility towards the environment when selecting brands (Kotler, 2011). The research figures indicate that the percentage of individuals who do not utilize environmentally friendly items decreased to less than 50% (Manget et al., 2009). The market for healthy and sustainable lifestyle products is growing and is estimated to be valued at \$209 billion, encompassing 17% to 19% of all end customers. Refer to Kotler (2011). Product offerings for this sector encompass energy-efficient goods, eco-tourism, and solar panels, among others (Kotler, 2011).

2.1 Green products/eco-friendly products

As eco-friendly products became familiar term marketers are increasingly utilizing environmental labels to promote products' identification (D'Souza, Taghian, & Lamb, 2006). Eco-label awareness has a positive impact on consumers' knowledge and purchase behavior (Rashid, 2009). He also stated that eco-labels are useful to attract consumers and inform about their purchase decision's impact on environment. According to Rashid currently more than 30 different green label schemes are available around the world. Many retailers and MNCs are investing money in the production of eco-friendly products such as- instead of selling toothpaste in a cardboard box marketers sell it in tube (Solomon et al., 2010, p. 211). This paper will mainly focus on Attitude toward green consumption, Local Environmental Awareness, Peer influence, Environmental Knowledge and Green Purchase behavior. Attitude toward green consumption Professor Icek Ajzen in his book "Attitude, Personality and Behavior" 2nd



edition (2005) defined attitude as a nature where one's response is favorable or unfavorable toward an object, person, institution or event. Also attitude defined as past experience which establishes a link between thoughts and behavior (Fill, 2006). Attitude plays an important role in consumer behavior and many researches have been conducted to understand consumer's attitude toward different products but less attention given to green purchase behaviour. This paper will focus on consumers' attitudes toward green products.

H1: There is a relationship between consumers' attitude toward green products and their purchase behaviour of buying green products.

2.2 Local Environmental Awareness

According to Kollmuss and Agyeman (2002), environmental awareness is the measure of how people view the effects of human activity on the environment. Community awareness refers to the perspective of local consumers on the environmental challenges faced in their own communities. Human behavior and an individual's environmental consciousness were found to be positively correlated in a 2003 study by Barr. Research shows that environmental awareness is the first step in embracing ecologically informed behaviour. A study undertaken by A. J. Roberts (1996) found that the degree of environmental awareness differentiates environmentally conscious consumers from non-environmentally conscious consumers.

H2: There is a relationship between consumers' local environmental awareness and their purchase behaviour of buying green products.

2.3 Peer Influence

Many studies showed peer influence on consumer behaviour. Peer group influence has an important impact on teenager's social context (Brown, 1990). Researchers suggested that peers influence each other by different ways:

Reinforcing and punishing agents (Lamb et al., 1980)

Modeling agents (Sagotsky and Lepper, 1982)

Objects for social comparisons (Shaffer, 1994)

Value-setter for a particular idea or behavior (Shaffer, 1994).

Homophily refers to the social phenomenon in which individuals are consistently influenced and exhibit similar characteristics (Ryan, 2001). Manifestation of peer group homophily in



behaviours such as smoking, drinking, drug usage, and dating (Urberg et al., 1997). Peer group effect, apart from risk-taking homophily, has been shown to impact several positive behaviors such as GPA, college aspirations, time spent on homework, overall participation in academics, academic motivation, and achievement (Ryan, 2001). The study conducted by Chen-Yu and Seock (2002) revealed that peer group effect is particularly evident in the clothing choices of adolescents. The study conducted by Lascu and Zinkhan (1999) also reveals that the decision of adolescents is frequently influenced by the opinions of their peer group. This article aims to evaluate the impact of peer influence on the decision to purchase green products.

H3: There is a relationship between peer influence and purchase behaviour of green products.

2.4 Environmental Knowledge

The findings of several research on environmental knowledge were inconclusive, since they consistently shown a weak or non-significant correlation between environmental knowledge and behavior. Although many studies have focused on abstract or fundamental environmental knowledge, Schahn and Holzer (1990) contend that a concrete level of information, namely solution-oriented behavioral knowledge, is essential for adopting appropriate actions to safeguard the environment. Several studies focused on the specific environmental knowledge of individuals and found that this knowledge influences their commitment to using environmentally friendly items. The study conducted by Bang et al. (2000) demonstrated that consumers with a higher level of environmental care are more inclined to pay a higher price for renewable energy compared to those with a lower level of environmental concern. The present study centres on the level of knowledge among local consumers and its influence on the buying of environmentally friendly products.

H4: There is a relationship between consumers' environmental knowledge and purchase behavior of green products.

2.5 Green Purchase Behaviour

Purchase behaviour refers to the specific style or pattern of purchase products exhibited by an individual. This behavior is contingent upon the assessment of the product's performance, price, quality, and other relevant factors. In their 2007 study, Teng and Laroche emphasized that the decision to buy a certain product necessitates evaluating other products that are already on the market. It is widely held among marketers that the most effective approach to



comprehending consumers' purchasing behavior is to analyze their present buying patterns. Marketing experts contend that there exists a direct correlation between consumers' buying behaviour and their opinion of the quality of a particular product or brand (Jaafar and Lalp, 2011).

3.0 Research Methodology

Data collecting occurs at the entrance of a mall or supermarket when customers are actively involved in their purchasing activity. This study was carried out in Dhaka city between May 12th and May 30th, 2015. The officially designated locations include Gulshan, Banani, Mirpur, and Uttara. For the purpose of evaluating the respondents' attitude, local environmental awareness, peer influence, purchasing behavior, environmental knowledge, and baseline demographic information, the survey was divided into six components. The poll employed a seven-point Likert scale format, where responses were classified from 'strongly disagree = 1' to 'strongly agree = 5'.

This study is a causal research inquiry seeking to establish the cause and effect relationship between independent and dependent variables. The sample was selected using a random sampling technique. The sampling unit consists of individuals residing in Dhaka city who purchase eco-friendly products. Total sample size is 200. Among all the surveys, only 171 were considered authentic, while the remaining 26 were attributed to invalidity because of incorrect filling by the respondents.

Measure	Value	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	114	66.7
	Female	57	33.3
Age	Under 25	23	13.5
	25-30	29	17
	30-35	48	28.1
	35-40	35	20.5
	40-45	17	9.9
	Over 50	9	5.3
Occupation	Government Employee	16	9.4
	PVT company Employee	73	42.7
	Business	33	19.3



	Other	49	28.7
Education	Masters	83	48.5
	Bachelor	54	31.6
	High School	34	19.9

The questionnaire was administered to 114 male and 57 female participants, accounting for 66.7% and 33.3% of the total respondents, respectively. Of the respondents, 9.4% were engaged in government employment, 42.7% were employed by private companies, 19.3% were businessmen, and 28.7% were classified as other professionals.

3.1 Reliability of Measures

Cronbach's alpha provides a good reliability in most situations. The value of α lies between 0 and 1. If the value of α is close to 1 it considers as better reliability but if the value of α is low then it represents that there were very few items or there is very little commonality among items (Churchill, 1979). Nunnally (1978) recommended that the research was conducted on 114 male and 57 female respondents that represents 66.7% and 33.3% respectively. Among the respondents 9.4% were government employees, 42.7% were private company employees, 19.3% were businessman and 28.7% were other professionals.

Cronbach's alpha is generally seen to have high reliability in most circumstances. The value of α is bounded between 0 and 1. A value near to 1 is regarded as indicative of higher reliability, while a low value of α suggests a scarcity of items or just minimal similarity among them (Churchill, 1979).

Variable	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha Value
Attitude	4	.846
Local Environmental Awareness	3	.820
Peer Influence	4	.818
Environmental Knowledge	3	.598
Green Purchase Behavior	3	.510

In this study, the coefficient alphas for the different constructs has been computed by using reliability procedure in SPSS. The Cronbach's Alpha of a variable determines the internal consistency among the items used to measure the variables:



Attitude: Table II, the reliability of the variable attitude has resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha .846 Which is good

Local Environmental Awareness: Table II, the reliability of the variable local environmental awareness has resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha .820 which is good.

Peer Influence: Table II, the reliability of the variable peer influence has resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha .818 which is good.

Environmental Knowledge: Table II, the reliability of the variable environmental knowledge has resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha .598 which is poor.

Green Purchase Behavior: Table II, the reliability of the variable green purchase behavior has resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha .510 which is poor

		Correlations				
		ATTITUDE	LOCAL	PEER	KNOWLEDGE	GREENBEHAVIOR
ATTITU	Pearson Correlation	1	.562**	.505**	.453**	.737**
DE	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	171	171	171	171	171
LOCAL	Pearson Correlation	.562**	1	.424**	.412**	.585**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	171	171	171	171	171
PEER	Pearson Correlation	.505**	.424**	1	.679**	.562**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	171	171	171	171	171
KNOWL	Pearson Correlation	.453**	.412**	.679**	1	.489**
EDGE	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	171	171	171	171	171
GREENB	Pearson Correlation	.737**	.585**	.562**	.489**	1
EHAVIO	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
R	N	171	171	171	171	171

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

It is observed that the Pearson correlation coefficient, r is positive and significance alpha is less than 0.05 in all cases which represent that all the independent variables (attitude, local, peer and knowledge) have significant positive association with dependent variable, green behavior. It can also be stated that among the four independent variables, 'attitude' has the strongest association and 'knowledge' has the least strong association with the dependent variable.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R	Std. Error of the Estimate
			Square	
1	.787 ^a	.620	.611	.53370



ATTITUDE, PEER

From the *above* table it is found that the variation of the dependent variable Green Behavior is explained by the variations of the independent variables- attitude, Local environmental awareness, Peer influence and environmental knowledge by 62%.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.864	.328		2.632	.009
ATTITU	.453	.056	.507	8.148	.000
DE	.199	.059	.199	3.349	.001
PEER	.145	.054	.186	2.712	.007
KNOWL	.039	.051	.051	.766	.445
EDGE					

a. Dependent Variable: Green behaviour

According to Pearson analysis, although individually all the independent variables have significant relationship with the dependent variable, while in the regression analysis as shown above it is found that all the independent variables in the regression equation have significant relationship with dependent variable except the environmental knowledge which has significant value more than .05. It means while combining all the variables in the model, environmental knowledge has no significant relationship with the dependent variable.



Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.737 ^a	.53	.540	.58015
2	.769 ^b	.591	.586	.55033
3	.786 ^c	.618	.612	.53304

a. Predictors: (Constant), ATTITUDE

b. Predictors: (Constant), ATTITUDE, PEER

c. Predictors: (Constant), ATTITUDE, PEER, LOCAL

3.2 Regression Analysis

Analysis of the stepwise regression table reveals that 54% of the variation in the dependent variable, Green buying behaviour, can be accounted for by the variance in the independent variable, "attitude" alone. Approximately 4.8% of the variation in the dependent variable of green purchase behaviour can be accounted for by the variance of the independent variable "peer" alone. The variance in the dependent variable of green buying behaviour is accounted for by the variance of the independent variable "Local environmental awareness" alone by a statistically significant difference of (.618-.591) 2.7%. Significantly, the regression equation does not include the independent variable "knowledge," suggesting that "Environmental Knowledge" does not exert any influence on the dependent variable.

4.0 Discussion

A correlation analysis was performed to investigate the association between attitude, local environmental awareness, peer influence, knowledge, and green purchase behavior. The most significant predictor in comprehending green purchase behavior for eco-friendly products has been identified as peer influence. Consumers' green buying behavior for eco-friendly products is influenced by four key aspects.

Environmental consciousness at the local level is identified as the second most significant factor predicting green buying behaviour in Bangladesh. The impact of local environmental consciousness on consumers' sustainable purchasing behavior for environmentally friendly products is significantly more significant.



The regression model indicates that peer influence is the most significant predictor among all the tested variables. Although environmental knowledge is considered less influential compared to other factors, previous studies have shown that it is primarily operational as abstract knowledge about environmental issues/problems. These studies have found no significant correlation between environmental knowledge and behavior (Lee, 2011) [34]. Nevertheless, the current study argues that the level of environmental knowledge has quite little impact on consumers' decision to buy environmentally friendly products.

5.0 Recommendation

The research identified several strategies for marketers to effectively promote environmentally friendly products and so impact the green buying habits of customers.

Firms can employ eco-label, eco-brand, and environmental advertising as marketing strategies to exert influence on consumers. The implementation of these technologies will have a significant impact on altering consumer buying dynamics, resulting in a preference for environmentally friendly items over synthetic ones (Delafrooz, Taleghani, & Nouri, 2014).

A label, as defined by the business dictionary, is a visual representation of information about a product that is shown on its container, packaging, or the product itself. Eco-label is a promotional tool designed to help consumers make informed decisions about buying environmentally friendly items. The use of eco-labels will enable consumers to comprehend the manufacturing process of the product. This label will enable marketers to distinguish their goods from those of competitors by designating it as environmentally friendly products. Under certain circumstances, marketers may choose to offer products with a clear "label," but legal requirements require them to provide customers with additional information (Delafrooz, Taleghani, & Nouri, 2014). Germany established the Blue-Angel eco-label in 1977 as its first implementation of eco-label schemes. In contemporary times, there are 30 distinct green label schemes that have been implemented and introduced by several countries such as China, Japan, Korea, India, Thailand, and Malaysia.

Effective branding is crucial for differentiating products from competition. The incorporation of an eco-brand element can assist consumers in differentiating environmentally friendly items from non-green products (Delafrooz, Taleghani, & Nouri, 2014). Previous study conducted in Western countries revealed that individuals in the USA and Germany tend to have a more



favourable perception of eco-brands, such as green energy and body shop (Wustenhagen & Bilharz, 2006). Consumers exhibit a favorable disposition towards eco-branded products.

Marketing efforts are prioritizing environmental advertising to effectively capture customer attention and support the green movement. First and foremost, the organization will implement an environmentally friendly positioning plan to establish a connection with the environment. Secondly, the company will demonstrate its commitment and prioritization of environmental improvement through environmental advertising. Furthermore, environmental advertising can be used to promote any particular project or environmental activity undertaken by a corporation (Rahbar & Wahid, 2011). For instance, Levi's jeans is advertising their jeans with the catchy tagline "8 bottles, 1 jean. Waste-less".

An effective marketing mix comprises four key elements known as the 4P's: product, price, location, and promotion. Service provision involves three other elements, namely people, method, and tangible proof. The green marketing principle asserts that every element of the marketing mix should take into account environmental concerns from the initial introduction to the final establishment of the product in the market (Arseculeratne & Yazdanifard, 2014).

6.0 Conclusion

This study has attempted to provide criteria for marketers to formulate strategies for promoting environmentally friendly purchasing behavior, including factors such as environmental awareness, peer influence, attitude, and products, in relation to local environmental conditions and environmental knowledge.

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