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# FACTORS INFLUENCING GREEN PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR: A CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

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Our current environmental situation requires serious attention. We can see the problems that our environment is facing everywhere, including air pollution, ozone depletion, global warming, hazardous waste disposal and water pollution. Today, consumers are aware that their individual consumption behaviour affects the environment and these consumers are more conscious of the seriousness of environmental degradation. Thus, consumers are increasingly engaging in environmentally friendly behaviour and are interested in supporting businesses that are engaging in green strategies. Green purchasing behaviour can help achieve a sustainable environment. The purpose of the study was to develop a conceptual model. And a model was developed on the basis of literature five factors that may influence green purchasing behaviour were examined in this study.

## **1. Introduction**

The concept of green products is related to sustainable manufacturing and supply chain management, which involves environment friendly, planet friendly, and people friendly standards, technologies and practices (Palevich, 2012). The concept of green is extended to almost every process step of procuring raw materials, producing, storing, packaging, shipping, and distribution of products (Palevich, 2012). For developing green processes in an entire supply chain, an organization need to investigate

the environmental and other factors influenced by the supply chain, identify the changes needed in the existing supply chain, identify sustainability challenges, identify their solutions, identify performance measures (and ways of measuring them), and develop a long-term sustainability plan (Beamon, 1999). There has been a strong interest in understanding the negative consequences of climate change for the economy and society. Recent researchers pointed out that neglecting the significance of environmental sustainability is likely to weaken the society that relies on natural resources to generate revenue (Jiang and Zheng, 2017). In fact, Stern (2007) claimed that climate change is one of the most influential factors of market failure. Climate change could result in a loss of 5–20 percent of gross domestic products (GDP), if there was no effective precautionary measure taken to protect the environment. This finding was consistent with previous studies (Weitzman, 2007; Nordhaus, 2007) which revealed that environment protection such as reduction in carbon emission should be prioritized to sustain a country's socio-economic. Hence, the issues of global climate change have been a challenge to economists and policy makers to identify countermeasures. To tackle the negative effects of different climate patterns and environmental degradation, one of the solutions is to introduce green products that can protect the environment (Pickett-Baker and Ozaki, 2007). Normally, conventional products are non-biodegradable and unrecyclable. These products contain chemical substances that gradually harm the environment. However, many green products have difficulties in targeting the mass market although they have existed in the market for a long time. In a nutshell, consumer ignorance has been as a hindrance to promoting green consumerism. Lim et al. (2013) found that the Malaysian' personal welfare are more important than the environmental well-being. They stated that the environmentalist should be responsible for managing environmental concerns. Undoubtedly, many countries have promoted environmentalism. Although numerous campaigns have been launched to preserve the environment, the concept of being green is novel for many citizens and their perception of eco-friendly products is low (Rezai et al., 2013). Thus, consumers have misconception about "green" due to insufficient understanding and information. Besides, Ginsberg and Bloom (2004) mentioned that eco-friendly products have been underrated by firms because they think that the products will not boost consumer demand since they are not necessity for the consumers. The majority of the consumers are not well informed about the benefits of green products that contribute to subsequent purchase (Nagaraju and Thejaswini, 2016). In a vast majority of the studies, the argument is made that consumers do not purchase green products, because they focus on other than green product attributes (Magnusson et al., 2001; Hughner et al., 2007). This implies that consumers do not consider green product attributes at all but, instead, focus on other attributes (such as health, quality, taste, price, brand equity). The purpose of this study is to examine the possible factors that may contribute to the boosting green purchasing behaviour of consumers.

## **2. Literature Review and Model Development**

### **2.1.1 Perceived seriousness of environmental problems**

Perceived seriousness of environmental problems Individuals are more influenced by their 'perceived seriousness of environmental problems' than the actual severity of those problems (Ghimire and Mohai, 2005). In developing countries, people see their local and national environment in poor conditions because of serious issues such as the greenhouse effect, air pollution, water pollution and solid waste management (Dunlap, 1994). The most dominant local serious environmental problems were sewage treatment, and water and air quality (Lee, 2009). Asian residents perceive their local environmental problems as more severe than the Western residents (Lee, 2009). Moreover, perceived seriousness is also used to describe crimes and other types of moral violations. Because we are connecting this notion to any environmental problems, we can conclude, using the logic, that contributing to or causing environmental harm is somehow considered a crime. Lee (2008) found a negative relationship between the 'perceived seriousness of environmental problems' and 'green purchasing decisions'. Few studies have examined how gender differences affect the seriousness of the perception of environmental problems. Lee (2009) claimed that adolescent girls in Hong Kong have a higher level of 'perceived seriousness of environmental problems' than boys, which is supported by the findings from Bord and O'Connor (1997) that women have a higher perceived vulnerability to hazardous waste and global

l warming risk than men.

H1 : Perceived seriousness of environmental problems has significant positive impact on Green purchasing behaviour

#### 2.1.2 Attitude towards green products

Attitude is considered as one of the important factors participants can evaluate in terms of the benefit of purchasing green products. Ajzen (1985) postulated that participants are more likely to be have when they think that participating in a certain act will be advantageous for them. Since then, the individuals' behaviours can be evaluated based on the participants' attitudes. With the studied context, attitude towards green products is perceived as the degree to which performance of green purchase behaviour is negatively or positively valued by individuals (Chen and Deng, 2016). Previously, attitude has been studied as an independent variable to predict behaviors. Green consumption studies contended that consumers are more willing to learn about eco-friendly products when they hold positive attitudes toward these products (Paul et al., 2016; Sharma and Dayal, 2016). Kim and Chung (2011) stressed that when consumers had positive mindset of green purchasing, they had higher intention to use green products. However, Vermeir and Verbeke's (2006) study was more diverse as the consumers had opposing intentions and attitudes toward the use of sustainable products. In connection with the current study, Tanner and Kast (2003) stated that positive attitudes toward environment can increase natural food consumption. This finding was confirmed by Taylor et al. (2010) in wine sector. Based on the basis of theoretical and empirical evidence, attitude is an important predictor of purchase intention. Hence, it proposes a directional relationship between attitude and intention to purchase green products.

H2 : Attitude towards green products has significant positive impact on Green purchasing behaviour

#### 2.1.3 Quality and Price of Green Product

Consumers view GPs as less effective than non-green products, implying that because they have a lower yield, they may require greater quantities to obtain the same effect (Lin and Chan, 2012). However, the perceived quality of a product, including GPs, directly affects the intent to purchase (Tseng and Hung, 2013). The price of GPs and other costs associated with their use also influence purchasing decisions (Gleim et al., 2013). The time required to evaluate and search for GPs is included in their cost. Because GPs are considerably more expensive than traditional products, their price deters nongreen consumers; these consumers are generally reluctant to search for information and evaluate the potential long-term gains associated with GPs (Gleim et al., 2013; Zhao et al., 2014). However, some consumers are willing to pay more for GPs (Laroche et al., 2001; Cherian and Jacob, 2012). The price sensitivity of consumers is related to their perception of value added by GPs; this value is often realized in the long term, primary examples include hybrid vehicles and solar panels (Drozdenco et al., 2011). The role of green marketing is to stress and communicate what consumers can expect from a GP in both the short- and long-term (Polonsky, 2011).

H3 : Quality and Price of Green Product have a significant positive impact on Green Purchasing Behaviour

#### 2.1.4 Concern for self-image with respect to environmental protection

Concern for self-image with respect to environmental protection Self-image is how a person thinks of himself or herself in different aspects of life. 'The image of an environmentally friendly person could thus project a good image of oneself to others' (Lee, 2008: 582). Sirgy (1982) developed a novel 'self-image/product-image congruity theory' that posits that consumer will consume definite products or brands that can further express his or her self-image. Green products' manufacturers can support their customer foundations and sell their green products by simply connecting the self and the public (Todd, 2004). Baker and Ozaki (2008) found that green behaviours are influenced by the pro-environmental self-image. In addition, social responsibility does not vanish once the product is consumed because green purchasing behaviour includes a self-identity that is associated with the general well-being of the public (Todd, 2004). Environmental behaviour can provide consumers with a social and special self-image besides improving their image when purchasing green products (Nyborg et al. 2006).

H4 : Concern for self-image with respect to environmental protection has a significant positive impact on Green Purchasing Behaviour.

#### 2.1.5 Environmental literacy

Numerous scholars have argued that the terms environmental literacy or ecological literacy have been used in so many different ways and/or are so all-encompassing that they have very little useful meaning (e.g., Disinger and



92, Roth 1992, Stables and Bishop 2001, Payne 2005, 2006). The introduction of the term ecoliteracy has further complicated the conversation. Disinger and Roth (1992) contended that the almost arbitrary application of the term environmental literacy has resulted in nearly as many different perceptions of the term as there are people who use it, and that while various groups often use the term to solidify or demonstrate correctness of either themselves or their clients, they give little or no indication of what they actually mean. Similarly, Stables and Bishop (2001) argued that the meaning of environmental literacy has been greatly muddled as a result of its indiscriminate application. Ecoliteracy is the ability to understand the natural systems that make life on earth possible. Ecoliteracy is the power that comes from the knowledge and consciousness of how nature's living systems operate. To be ecoliterate means understanding the principles of organization of ecological communities, collaboration, and using these principles for creating sustainable human communities. Ecoliteracy takes place when we humans let Nature become our teacher. Ecoliteracy takes place when we form a legacy by passing our knowledge and our ecoliterate worldview on to other members of our community. We can't develop a behaviour without proper literacy and information so we can assume that Eco-Literacy has a positive impact on green purchasing behaviour.

H5 : Environmental Literacy has a significant positive impact on Green purchasing behaviour. **3.The**

**Conceptual Model 4. Conclusion** Green Consumerism is a recent development in consumer behaviour. The development of green consumerism have a vital role in promoting eco-friendly consumerism. Most of the literature is concerned with impact analysis and factor analysis. The model based studies are limited in this area. A conceptual model based study is required to understand the factors which support green purchasing behaviour. This study highlights the factors influence green purchasing behaviour. The variables selected from literature to develop the conceptual framework are Perceived seriousness of environmental problems, Attitude towards green products, Quality and Price of Green Product, Concern for self-image with respect to environmental protection and Environmental literacy stated as an additional construct. Also the empirical testing of the conceptual model will initiate further studies in the area. **References**

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