iJRASET
International Journal For Research in Applied Science and Engineering Technology



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH

IN APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Volume: 13 **Issue:** VI **Month of publication:** June 2025

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22214/ijraset.2025.71997

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International Journal for Research in Applied Science & Engineering Technology (IJRASET)
ISSN: 2321-9653; IC Value: 45.98; SJ Impact Factor: 7.538
Volume 13 Issue VI June 2025- Available at www.ijraset.com

Consumer Behavior and Green Product Adoption: Motivations, Challenges, and Green Practices Implications in India

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Abstract:*The demand for environmentally friendly products in India has experienced a significant increase in recent years, propelled by heightened ecological awareness among consumers. Many individuals now consider the environmental impact of their purchases and are willing to spend more on eco-friendly options. This shift towards a "green" mindset is influencing consumer purchasing decisions, which continue to evolve as better alternatives become available in the marketplace. Globally, the use of green products is on the rise due to modern consumers' environmental concerns. Numerous businesses have expressed their commitment to addressing environmental issues, developing more eco-friendly products to combat climate change and reduce carbon emissions. Consequently, marketers should focus on identifying "Green consumers" and understanding their motivations for purchasing environmentally friendly items. The primary goal of green marketing is to preserve the environment for future generations. This research paper examines the complexities of consumer purchasing behavior regarding green products, including the motivations, obstacles, and influential factors associated with these choices. In an era of increasing environmental awareness, the study aims to shed light on the multifaceted nature of consumer preferences for sustainable and eco-conscious products. It adopts a comprehensive approach, integrating insights from various disciplines to provide a holistic understanding of how consumers interact with green products. The current marketplace is experiencing a notable shift towards environmental sustainability and responsible consumption. This paper contributes to this paradigm by offering an in-depth exploration of the factors underlying consumer purchasing decisions for green products. The findings from this study have wide-ranging implications for businesses, policymakers, and marketers, guiding them in the promotion of sustainable products and eco-friendly practices.*

Keywords: Consumer behavior, Green products, Environmental sustainability, Eco-conscious, Sustainable marketing, Environmental consciousness.

I. INTRODUCTION

The American Marketing Association defines green marketing as the promotion of products believed to be environmentally friendly. In India, the Green Revolution emerged as a new movement in the late 1990s, reflecting changes in consumer preferences, purchasing habits, and societal concerns. Plonsky (1994) describes "green marketing" as "Anything that aims to establish and promote connections that fulfill human needs and desires in the environmentally conscious way possible." In essence, green marketing involves promoting goods and services by emphasizing their positive environmental impact.

Dr. Rajesh Mankani, (2022) explains that the "green marketing" concept is a comprehensive approach that emphasizes producing and offering various goods and services with minimal negative environmental impact. This aligns with consumers' awareness of pollution, non-recyclable waste, climate change, and other environmental issues.

Thoria Omer Mahmoud (2018) notes that the term "green marketing" arose from corporations' environmental awareness. These organizations recognized that their survival depends on aligning their interests with consumer and societal benefits. Green marketing encompasses a wide range of activities, including product development, manufacturing process changes, advertising alterations, and packaging modifications.

Nguyen Thi Le Ha and Nguyen Pham ThuyLinh (2023) state that green marketing refers to campaigns highlighting products and services that reduce negative impacts on society and the environment. Green marketing encompasses activities that provide optimal service to consumers while meeting their needs efficiently and innovatively, ensuring no environmental threats. Globally, increased awareness of global warming and adverse climate conditions has led to greater interest in environmental protection and sustainable development.

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Consumers who prefer and are willing to buy eco-friendly products create opportunities for businesses that use "eco-friendly" and "environmentally friendly" as part of their value proposition. In this context, environmentally conscious behavior is referred to as environmental consumerism and "green buying." This paper aims to explore Indian consumers' environmental concerns, environmental awareness, knowledge of ecological products, and the impact of income and education levels on green shopping behavior. Defining green marketing succinctly is challenging due to its multifaceted nature. In the modern era, consumer understanding of environmental issues, particularly global warming and pollution, has significantly improved worldwide, becoming a global concern.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Agrahari and Jaiswal (2022) conducted a study on "Consumers Awareness towards Green Marketing and Consumer Perception and Preferences in Varanasi," polling 100 individuals. Their research examined participants' buying habits and environmental concerns, revealing an increasing need to address consumer awareness, ecological issues, and a growing preference for environmentally friendly products.

George and George (2022) titled "The Influence of Green Marketing on Consumer Behavior in Tamil Nadu" investigated the impact of green marketing on consumer purchasing decisions. They analyzed environmental concerns, consumer understanding of green principles, and the adoption of eco-friendly products and practices. In Chennai,

Vidya (2019) carried out a study called "A Study on Consumer's Attitude towards Green Marketing" with 100 participants. The research aimed to evaluate consumers' thought processes and knowledge regarding green product purchases. The findings demonstrated significant awareness among people about green products and their environmental impact.

Fouziya and Gracious (2018) explored the "Awareness of Green Marketing and Its Influence on Consumer Perception" in their study. Involving 50 men and 50 women, the research sought to determine how understanding green and eco-friendly marketing affects consumers' buying decisions. The results indicated that consumer perceptions influence their purchasing behavior.

Batool and Iqbal (2016) investigated the "Impact of Green Advertising on Consumer Purchase Behavior." Their study, which included 384 Pakistani students, found that participants were aware of environmental issues and eager to learn about green advertising. The key findings showed that consumer purchasing decisions are influenced by environmental literacy and concern for environmental protection.

Bhatia and Jain (2014) surveyed 106 respondents for their study "Green Marketing A Study of Consumer Perception and Preferences in India." The research evaluated consumer understanding of green values and environmental issues. Results revealed that consumers possessed excellent knowledge of green values, marketing strategies, and products.

Chakraborty et al. (2020) performed "An Empirical Study on Green Marketing from the Indian Consumer Perspective with Special Reference to Bengaluru." The study focused on the evolution and benefits of green marketing, its application, and various components of the marketing mix. Using primary and secondary data, the research found that environmental concerns impact customer purchasing decisions.

Sodiand Ghosh (2020) gathered primary data from 119 respondents for their "Study Green Marketing: An Empirical Study on Jharkhand Context Consumer Perception and Preferences." This study, conducted in the rural sector, briefly explains Jharkhand's environmental problems and determines customers' value and knowledge regarding environmental issues and green products and techniques.Jharkhand so the result of study consumer have less knowledge of green products and practices.

(Mahmoud, 2017) conducted study “Impact of green marketing mix on purchase intention” This study focuses on the impact of green marketing mix in Sudan and buying behavior of consumers, Total 341 respondents were used in this study consumer willing to pay for green products and save the environment because in our planet we are suffering how to protect environment from Pollution.

A. Study Aims

This research seeks to Investigate the influence of consumers' environmental concerns, eco-friendly product awareness, and environmental knowledge on their purchase of sustainable goods. Determine consumers' willingness to pay premium prices for environmentally friendly products. Explore the impact of demographic factors, educational background, and income on consumer behavior regarding eco-friendly purchases. Uncover the prospects and obstacles in green marketing.

B. Research Approach

Data was gathered from various online sources, publications, papers, and articles. The study employs exploratory research techniques to collect information on customer purchasing habits and environmental concerns.

III. GREEN MARKETING COMPONENTS

1) Eco-Friendly Products: These items are biodegradable, environmentally safe, and manufactured using sustainable methods, including eco-conscious packaging and promotion. Features like energy efficiency and organic production lead to decreased resource use and pollution. These products are not tested on animals. Businesses can enhance their products' environmental aspects by choosing sustainable materials, developing energy and water-efficient items, or creating less toxic and more eco-friendly alternatives compared to competitors. In business contexts, "green product" and "environmentally friendly product" typically refer to items designed to preserve or enhance the natural environment through energy conservation and reduction or elimination of harmful substances.(Mandliya et al., 2020)

2) Sustainable Pricing: Consumers often accept higher prices for products perceived as having greater value. They are willing to pay more for items that demonstrably benefit the environment. Green pricing capitalizes on the expanding market for eco-friendly goods and services among customers who value energy conservation and environmental protection. This pricing strategy considers people, the environment, and profits, ensuring worker and community health while guaranteeing effective output. It can be implemented through changes in appearance, function, or personalization. (Awasthi et al., 2022)

3) Eco-Conscious Distribution: Green distribution in marketing aims to create environmentally friendly locations and reduce carbon emissions by managing logistics to decrease traffic pollution. Product availability at the right place and time influences consumer purchasing behavior. Location plays a crucial role in attracting customers to buy products.We are aware that recourses are finite but our need and wants are limit less then it is use of marketer to use available resources efficiently and meet organization goal on time.Place has several aspect that can generate income and a specific result it is not cost producing element. This marketing mix is give “how to handle distance” advice

4) Green Promotion: Addresses the relationship between products and the environment, promotes an ecological lifestyle, and demonstrates a corporate image of environmental .They defines a product or service that promotes green living standards.(Awasthi al.)

Green promotion involves educating customer about businesses environmental commitments and initiatives.that several elements make up the green marketing mix action such as sales, public relations, and sponsored advertising, directmarketing, advertisements and public relation. Green Promotion practices educating customer about business environment promise and effort. Several components make up the green marketing mix action such as sales promotion, public relation and advertisement, direct marketing

Relationship Frame Work of Green Marketing and Purchase decision of Customer

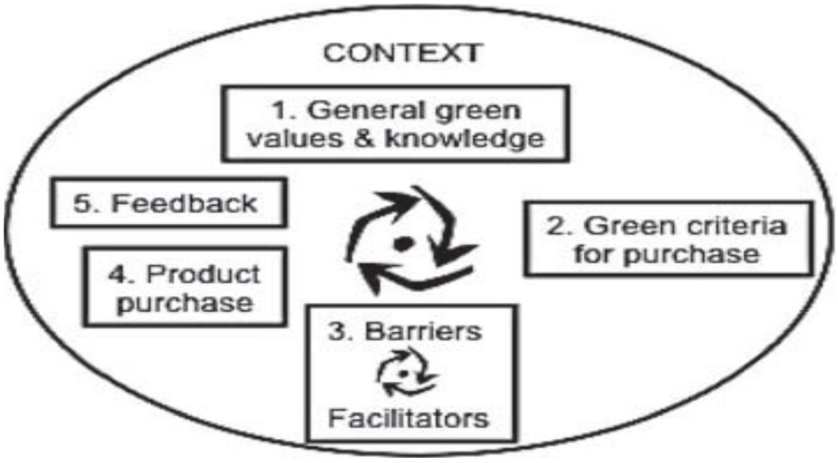


Figure 1. Green consumer purchasing model

Source Young et al. (2009)

IV. BARRIERS IN GREEN MARKETING

1) Convincing Consumers: Manufacturers often struggle to persuade consumers regarding eco-friendly products due to dissatisfaction with the company's performance and strategies. (Ghorai&Sengupta, 2021)
2) Elevated Costs: The idea of green marketing is generally expensive, as the promotion and packaging of sustainable products involve significant costs. It is well known that these items require innovative and creative methods. Eco-friendly products are made to be recyclable and renewable, which contributes to their increased prices. One significant obstacle for consumers is the expense, along with a lack of knowledge about the products and their characteristics.
3) Avoiding Green Myopia: Sometimes, businesses place too much emphasis on the environmental benefits of their products, overlooking the actual requirements and preferences of consumers. If green products are priced excessively, they may find it hard to gain traction in the market. Creating a product that is environmentally conscious in all aspects but fails to fulfill customer needs results in a situation known as green myopia. (Ghorai&Sengupta, 2021)
4) Emerging Awareness: In both urban and rural settings, the idea of green products is relatively novel, as people are still learning about their benefits and uses. It is crucial to educate consumers about the importance of these products for environmental conservation. While consumers are aware of the necessity of using various offerings available in the market, they often lack knowledge of green products and their significance in everyday life. Indian consumers, influenced by Ayurvedic principles, acknowledge the advantages of natural and herbal offerings. In areas such as beauty, they are adopting healthier lifestyles, including yoga and natural food practices, which enhance their acceptance of green products in these fields.
5) Government Regulations: Governments often change the rules and regulations regarding environmental practices. Complying with these regulations is becoming increasingly difficult for both local and commercial entities in India. Shifts in the legal framework can make common business practices and products illegal or detrimental to the environment.

The Advantages of Green Marketing

Fostering Client Relationships

Green marketing serves as a link that enhances the relationship with clients while simultaneously helping to establish a positive and trustworthy rapport with customers. As a result, green marketing increases client confidence.

Enhancing Competitive Edge

Green marketing acts as an effective competitive strategy, enabling companies to sustain a consistent level of competitiveness. Over time, businesses that adopt green marketing practices will have an edge over those that do not embrace environmentally friendly methods.

Boosting Brand Reputation

Green marketing contributes to the creation of a strong brand reputation due to the organization's eco-friendly initiatives. Eco-conscious products, packaging, and management strategies are in high demand today. Consumers tend to prefer businesses that demonstrate environmental responsibility.

Eco-Conscious Practices

Marketers today recognize environmental challenges and their implications, learning to utilize resources and promote their offerings as “eco-friendly” products. Research has shown that products like plastics and pesticides can be detrimental to the environment.

Recommendations

Governments should encourage the promotion of eco-friendly products to help safeguard the environment from carbon footprints.
Various media channels should be utilized to raise awareness of green products in both rural and urban communities.

Enhance product labeling and information to help consumers make more informed green purchases.

V. FINDING

The findings suggest that the choice to purchase eco-friendly products is affected by social influence, personal identification with green values, and previous experiences with green purchases. A key factor influencing green buying behavior was consumers' identification with environmentally conscious traits.Many respondents express concerns about their health, but most consider them environmentally conscious. However, some of these respondents are unwilling to pay more if the prices of green products increase

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in the future. As a result, raising customer awareness and providing education about green products are essential for helping people better understand their benefits.(George & George, 2022)

A. *Study Limitations*

This study did not involve any primary data collection and solely relied on secondary data. Consequently, the data employed in this study is only qualitative in nature with recommendation and suggestion.

VI. CONCLUSION

Conclusion In India, there is a growing emphasis on health and environmental consciousness among consumers, who are increasingly seeking eco-friendly products. This research investigates Indian consumers' perceptions, values, and purchasing habits regarding Green Products. Despite awareness of these items, many individuals remain hesitant to buy them. While consumers grasp the concept of green products, their limited understanding often leads to uncertainty in making purchases, suggesting a need for increased government efforts to educate the public. This emerging trend in India presents significant opportunities for enhancing education, disseminating information, influencing cultural norms, and promote innovation. To achieve a collective shift towards healthier products and a cleaner environment, cooperation between officials, citizens, and manufacturers is crucial. Manufacturers and marketers have a responsibility to convince consumers of the advantages of green products, helping them recognize the importance of choosing environmentally friendly options over conventional alternatives. Although the findings of this study may not be universally applicable due to its specific geographic focus, it offers valuable insights into green marketing strategies for consumers.

Conflict of Interest

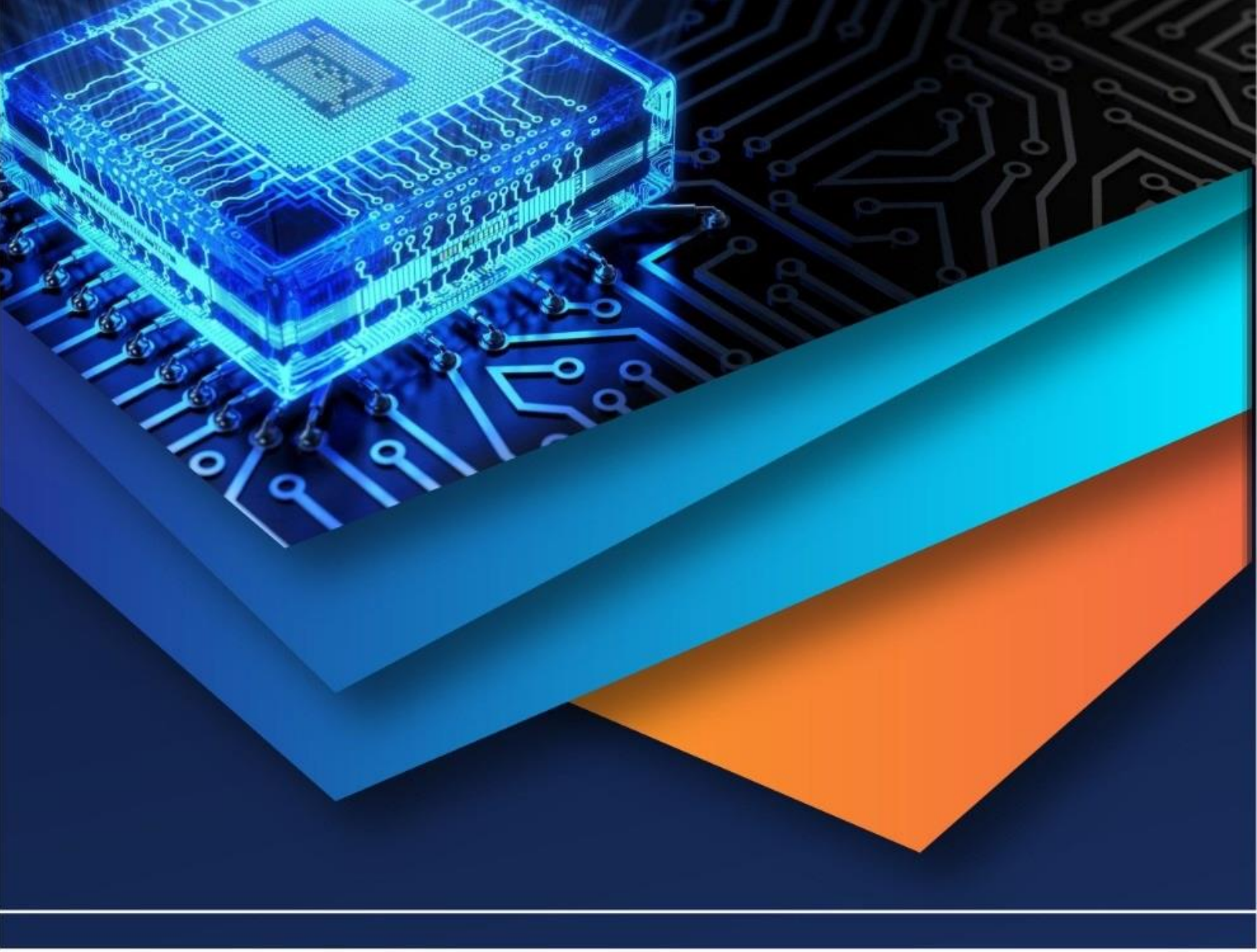
The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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