

The Influence of the Availability of Environmentally Friendly Food on Consumers' Green Purchasing Behavior

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Abstract: *For a long time, scientists, intellectuals, and environmentalists around the world have advocated for adopting an eco - friendly lifestyle. Unmindful human activities over the past few decades have caused irreversible damage to the Earth's ecosystem. Green marketing, or sustainable marketing, has emerged as a highly effective tool to address the problem of environmental degradation. The present era can be seen as a time of revelation and introspection regarding the impact of human activities on the environment. With the emergence of deadly diseases, it is imperative to recognize the importance of a healthy lifestyle. It is essential to motivate people to adopt products with green attributes by employing appropriate green marketing strategies. The present research paper attempts to analyse the impact of availability of eco - friendly food products on consumer buying behaviour.*

Keywords: Green Marketing, Sustainability, Eco - friendly food products, organic products

1. Introduction

In recent years, heightened environmental consciousness has precipitated a significant transformation in consumer purchasing behavior, particularly concerning green food products. As global environmental challenges become more acute, consumers are increasingly inclined to make choices that align with sustainable and eco - friendly practices. This article delves into the determinants of eco - friendly consumer purchasing behavior and examines how these dynamics manifest in the market for green food products.

The Ascendancy of Eco - Friendly Consumerism

Eco - friendly consumerism pertains to purchasing habits that prioritize environmental sustainability. This trend is underpinned by a burgeoning recognition of the impact of consumer choices on the environment. Key drivers of this shift include:

- 1) **Environmental Cognizance:** Augmented awareness of climate change, pollution, and resource depletion has catalyzed consumer demand for products that mitigate environmental harm.
- 2) **Health Considerations:** Green food products are frequently perceived as healthier alternatives, devoid of deleterious pesticides, additives, and genetically modified organisms (GMOs).
- 3) **Ethical Implications:** Consumers are increasingly attuned to the ethical ramifications of their purchases, such as fair trade practices, animal welfare, and the minimization of food waste.

Green Food Products: Definition and Attributes

Green food products are characterized by production, processing, and packaging methods that exert minimal environmental impact. Essential attributes include:

- **Organic Certification:** Products cultivated without synthetic pesticides or fertilizers.
- **Local and Seasonal Production:** Foods produced locally and consumed in season to curtail the carbon footprint associated with transportation and storage.

- **Minimal Processing:** Products that undergo minimal processing to conserve natural resources and reduce waste.
- **Sustainable Packaging:** Utilization of biodegradable, recyclable, or minimal packaging materials.

Determinants of Eco - Friendly Purchasing Behavior

Several factors influence consumers' proclivity to purchase green food products:

- 1) **Knowledge and Awareness:** Educated consumers who are cognizant of environmental issues are more inclined to purchase green food products.
- 2) **Perceived Value:** The perceived health benefits, quality, and ethical value of green food products can drive consumer preference.
- 3) **Social Influence:** Recommendations from family, friends, and influencers can significantly impact purchasing decisions.
- 4) **Availability and Accessibility:** The ease of access to green food products in local markets or online platforms enhances their purchase likelihood.
- 5) **Price Sensitivity:** While some consumers are willing to pay a premium for green products, price remains a critical consideration for many.

Consumer Segmentation in Green Food Markets

Understanding consumer segments can facilitate targeted marketing efforts. Typical segments include:

- **True Greens:** Highly committed to sustainable living and willing to undertake significant lifestyle modifications.
- **Light Greens:** Supportive of eco - friendly products but less consistent in their purchasing behavior.
- **Potential Greens:** Interested in green products but constrained by factors such as price and availability.
- **Non - Greens:** Least likely to purchase green products, often due to skepticism or lack of interest.

Marketing Strategies for Green Food Products

To effectively market green food products, businesses should consider the following strategies:

- 1) **Transparent Labeling:** Providing clear information about the environmental benefits and certifications can build trust with consumers.
- 2) **Narrative Marketing:** Sharing the story behind the product, including its production process and ethical practices, can resonate with consumers.
- 3) **Community Engagement:** Building a community around sustainability through events, social media, and educational campaigns can foster loyalty.
- 4) **Partnerships and Collaborations:** Partnering with environmental organizations and influencers can amplify the reach and credibility of green food products.
- 5) **Incentives and Discounts:** Offering promotions can attract price - sensitive consumers and encourage trial purchases.

Challenges and Future Directions

Despite the burgeoning popularity of green food products, several challenges persist:

- **Elevated Costs:** Organic and sustainably produced foods often command a higher price, which can be a barrier for many consumers.
- **Misinformation and Greenwashing:** The prevalence of misleading claims about the environmental benefits of certain products can erode consumer trust.
- **Limited Availability:** In some regions, access to green food products remains constrained, hindering widespread adoption.

Future directions for promoting eco - friendly consumer purchasing behavior include:

- **Advancements in Sustainable Agriculture:** Innovations in sustainable farming practices can help reduce costs and improve the availability of green food products.
- **Policy Support:** Government policies that support organic farming, reduce food waste, and promote sustainable consumption can drive market growth.
- **Consumer Education:** Ongoing efforts to educate consumers about the environmental and health benefits of green food products can sustain and enhance eco - friendly purchasing behavior.

2. Literature Review

1) Lei Wang, Philip PW Wong, and Elangkovan A Narayanan (2019), in their research paper worked on green hotel industry. Numerous prior studies have explored the impact of demographic characteristics on consumers' green purchasing attitudes and behavioral intentions, yet the findings have been far from definitive. Moreover, the green hotel industry has received scant attention in such research. This study aims to investigate the relationship between age, gender, education, income, green purchasing attitudes, and green behavioral intention in the context of green hotel selection. A theoretical research model is proposed, grounded in the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behavior. Using SPSS, hypotheses were empirically tested with data from approximately 659 valid questionnaires. The results indicate a significant positive relationship between green purchasing attitudes and green behavioral intention. Both age and income were found to significantly influence green purchasing attitudes, while education and income significantly influenced green behavioral intention. Notably, the findings

reveal significant differences between male and female influences on green purchasing attitudes and behavioral intentions. The paper concludes with an in - depth discussion of the practical and academic implications, as well as the limitations of the study.

2) Shweta Kumar (2023), The study demonstrated that demographic factors significantly influence consumer attitudes toward green durable products. It also found a strong correlation between demographic factors and consumers' environmental concerns, environmental awareness, perceived consumer effectiveness, and social norms. These elements shape consumer attitudes toward green durable products. Specifically, the study identified that mature, married males are more attuned to factors influencing consumer attitudes. Additionally, education and income emerged as prominent demographic factors in shaping consumer attitudes. Concerning geographic location, residents of the National Capital Region (NCR) are more influenced by these factors compared to those in Delhi.

3) Caroline Fisher, Shristy Bashyal Bonnie Bachman (2012) Researchers have persistently examined the demographics of green consumers, yielding mixed results. This article summarizes relevant literature since 1998 to identify which demographics influence environmental purchasing. Gender consistently emerged as a significant factor, with women more likely to engage in green behaviors. This research analyzed survey responses to investigate the environmentally friendly behaviors of consumers and their demographic correlations. It identified several demographics related to specific environmentally friendly behaviors, more so than in previous studies. The authors concluded that focusing on specific behaviors, rather than general statements or attitudes, may better capture the effects of demographic factors.

4) Boban Melovic, T. Backovic, B. Dudic, Dragana Cirovic V. M. Gregus (2020), The researchers investigated the key factors influencing consumer preferences, product choices, and the acceptance of organic food. They focused on organic food price, product attributes, promotion, and distribution channels as the primary elements affecting consumer preferences. An online questionnaire was distributed to potential respondents through corporate group emails, conducted over a 30 - day period in 2019 in Montenegro, Europe. The sample size comprised 1, 051 respondents. The findings revealed that promotion and price had the most significant impact on consumers' buying decisions. The analysis indicated that attitudes, modern media promotion, the price/quality ratio, and distribution barriers were the factors with the highest significant impact on consumer attitudes and perceptions. These insights can assist producers and marketers in better understanding how to add value to organic food products, thereby aligning their offerings with consumer preferences and expectations.

3. Research Methodology

Statement of the problem: Understanding consumer preferences, motivating factors, and barriers to adopting green food products is crucial for effective positioning and promotion. Currently, the consumption of green products is not meeting the levels necessary to adequately protect both

consumers and the environment. Therefore, expanding the use of green commodities is essential. To achieve this goal, it is vital to comprehend the factors that drive consumers toward green food products and to organize these factors to develop the most effective green marketing strategy. Thus, the research problem focuses on identifying and analyzing the effect of availability of products on consumer preferences for eco - friendly food products.

Research Question: how do people react in response to green marketing while purchasing green food items?

Objectives of Study: To Study the Impact of Green Marketing on Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Eco - friendly processed food Products.

Sample Size: 754 responses were collected.

Hypothesis:

H₀: There is no significant impact of availability of products on consumer buying behaviour towards eco - friendly processed food products.

H₀₁: There is a significant impact of availability of products on consumer buying behavior towards eco - friendly processed food products.

4. Data Analysis

S. No.	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
1	Marketing Mix Variables: Place (Availability)	Consumer Behaviour (CBB)
2	Consumer would be more willing to purchase an eco - friendly food product if it is easily available in shops near residence. (PLc 1)	Preference for natural and preservative - free food products (CBB1)
3	Consumer would be more inclined to purchase an eco - friendly product if is properly displayed in store to grab attention (PLc 2)	Eco friendliness main criterion of purchase (CBB2)
4	If an eco - friendly product is not available in a store then consumer don't mind going to another store for purchasing that product. (PLc 3)	taste is main criterion of purchase (CBB3)
5	If an eco - friendly product is not available in market I purchase it on - line. (PLc 4)	Preference for Recyclable/ biodegradable packaging (CBB4)
6	If an eco - friendly product is not available then I don't mind purchasing a non - green alternative. (PLc 5)	

Basic data distribution of place (availability) attributes:

	SD		D		N		A		SA	
	Count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%
Plc 1	29	3.8%	187	24.8%	218	28.9%	220	29.2%	100	13.3%
Plc 2	5	.7%	13	1.7%	350	46.4%	334	44.3%	52	6.9%
Plc 3	5	.7%	81	10.7%	373	49.5%	243	32.2%	52	6.9%
Plc 4	6	.8%	11	1.5%	231	30.6%	390	51.7%	116	15.4%
Plc 5	6	.8%	85	11.3%	243	32.2%	408	54.1%	12	1.6%

Test used: Spearman Correlation and regression analysis
Level of significance: 5%

First Spearman correlation is used to analyze if there is a significant relationship between the two variable.

- P<0.05 for place attributes, so there is a significant impact of place attribute on consumer buying behaviour.
- On the basis of Spearman Correlation and regression estimates it can be concluded that Null hypothesis (H₀₃) is rejected and Alternate hypothesis (H₁₃) is accepted.

Table 131: Spearman Correlation table for Place attribute.

		CBB1	CBB2	CBB3	CBB4
Plc_1	Correlation Coefficient	.512**	.534**	-.215**	.388**
	P - Value	.000	.000	.000	.000
Plc_2	Correlation Coefficient	.270**	.349**	-.134**	.279**
	P - Value	.000	.000	.000	.000
Plc_3	Correlation Coefficient	.545**	.595**	-.277**	.544**
	P - Value	.000	.000	.000	.000
Plc_4	Correlation Coefficient	.457**	.517**	-.290**	.378**
	P - Value	.000	.000	.000	.000
Plc_5	Correlation Coefficient	-.522**	-.620**	.572**	-.386**
	P - Value	.000	.000	.000	.000

Source: Researcher's own analysis.

Marketing Mix Variables:

Regression estimates of Marketing Mix factors:

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Standardized Estimate	Unstandardized Estimate	P - value
Consumer Behaviour	Place Attribute	0.534	0.418	0

5. Conclusion

The study extensively examined various factors impacting consumer buying behavior, making its findings valuable for food processing companies. These insights can aid in designing better product attributes and more effective marketing strategies to encourage the adoption of eco - friendly food commodities. The findings will help food processing units identify key factors that enhance the adaptability of eco - friendly food products. Additionally, marketers will be able to recognize barriers to the popularity and acceptance of green products, enabling them to take corrective actions to overcome these obstacles. Communicating the positive attributes of green products to consumers will better prepare them to incorporate these products into their regular consumption habits.

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