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Analyzing Factors that Affect Green Purchase Behavior: From the Context of Bangladeshi Consumers

Zakia Binte Jamal, Sohel Islam, and Promotosh Barua

***Abstract*—Across the globe acceptance of green products are increasing. This study tries to investigate the scenario from the context of Bangladesh. It focuses on the factors affecting consumers' attitude and their buying behavior. This study tries to understand the consumers' attitude, intention and behavior based on theory of planned behavior. It examines four factors that has direct influence on consumer purchase behavior and these factors are- attitude, local environmental awareness, peer influence and knowledge. This paper investigates and tries to understand the purchase behavior of green products of Bangladeshi consumers. In this study quantitative approach has been used. Data was collected from different supermarkets in specific places in Dhaka city.**

***Index Terms*—Eco-friendly products, environmental awareness, green marketing strategies, green purchase behavior.**

I. Introduction

Green marketing is relatively new term in business endeavors. This most latest and popular trend in market facilitates environment-friendly habitat for individual, animal and planet (Rajeshkumar, 2012)[1]. Consumers are now more aware about environment and they think that environment protection is not only a responsibility to government but it is also their responsibility as consumers (Fraj & Martinez, 2006, 2007)[2]. This "environment" more specifically "green environment" concern became challenging issue to marketers and generated the concept of "green marketing". By realizing the scenario firms have slowly applied green marketing practices in their projects as part of their social responsibility and trying to reach audiences with green messages (Nagaraju & Thejaswini, 2014)[3]. Firms have introduced green packaging programs through the recommendation of recyclable and reusable packages. In the opinion of Lionel Robinson, a renowned economist, all resources are limited and human wants are unlimited, to utilize these scares resources green marketing is inevitable. In late 1980's "green movement" started in Great Britain and slowly spread out in other nations.

"Green marketing" refers to green products which is environmentally safe or does not create any threat to environment. Several activities are involved in green marketing which includes product modification, packaging and advertising (Mishra & Sharma, 2010)[4]. In some studies green marketing has been compared with holistic marketing. Holistic marketing includes everything from producing, marketing, consuming and disposing the product in environment friendly way.

Now-a-days sustainable development became the most challenging issue. This issue is mainly challenging for developing nations as their population is increasing every year. Hart mentioned in his studies that world's population is increasing 90 million every year and will be doubled in the next 40 years (Hart, 1997)[5]. By realizing the consequences of overpopulation people are more conscious about environment. One survey found that 83% American consumers said they prefer buying environment friendly products (Dagnoli, 1991)[6]. Another survey found that 23% of American consumers make purchases based on environmental considerations (Joseph, 1991)[7].

Like western consumers Asian consumers are also increasingly becoming sensible toward ecological problems (Harris, 2010). Fast growing economies in Asia have changed the consumption pattern of financially-empowered consumers who are willing to spend more money compare to their previous generations (Lee & Han, 2011)[8].

This paper will discuss Bangladeshi consumers' purchase behavior of green products from the future context. According to the World Bank, estimated population of Bangladesh is over 157million (World Bank, 2013). One of the biggest challenges for Bangladesh in coming years is to handle this overpopulation by maintaining food security and environment. With the scares resource like land meeting the food demand of this overpopulation is difficult. To meet the demand farmers are using chemical fertilizers and pesticides which are ruining our environment day by day. Also product or commodities used for day to day life living is not eco-friendly or disposable. By realizing this situation demand for eco-friendly products or green products are rising. Currently few green products are available in the Bangladeshi market. This paper will find out the certain factors affecting green behavior in case of purchasing green products.

II. Research Gap

Many researches have been conducted to understand the changing behavior of consumers. To understand savvy consumers and factors influencing green behavior these researches help international organizations to extend their product lines. A recent survey based on 1000 American in 2012 reveals that 44% respondents trust the environmental claim of the firms and 42% of the respondents ignore environmental products because they think price is more of these products compare to conventional products (Cone

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Green Gap Trend Tracker, 2012, p. 1). In Bangladesh so far there is no significant formal research conducted to understand the green behavior of Bangladeshi consumers. There is a scope to find out the factors playing important role to influence green behavior. Research was needed to conduct to understand Bangladeshi consumers' purchase behavior and to understand their attitude, peer influence and their awareness regarding environmental issues.

III. Objectives of the Study

- Identify certain factors affecting green purchase behavior of consumers
- Identify the relationship between different factors which influence to purchase behavior of green products.
- Identify factors which is having more influence on purchase behavior and which one is having less influence on purchase behavior
- Assist marketers to generate more influential green marketing strategies to influence the purchase behavior

IV. Literature Review

"Green marketing" and "Environmental Marketing" became very popular term in recent times. Many governments around the world became concerned about green marketing activities. For example- in USA the Federal Trade Commission and the National Association of Attorneys-General started extensive document examining for green marketing issues [FTC 1991, NAAG 1990] or the UK government has introduced 5000 pound subsidies as incentive to boost the sales of electric car (BBC, 2009). UK government's this initiative is the part of the government's £250m plan to promote low carbon transport.

Many researchers defined "green marketing" in different ways. A research described broader aspects of "green marketing". It includes product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. The research mentioned the common perception of "green marketing" refers to promotion or advertising of products with environmental characteristics where terms like Phosphate Free, Recyclable, Refillable, Ozone Friendly, and Environmentally Friendly are associated (Polonsky, 1994)[9].

Many consumers are concentrating on new dimension called Corporate Social Responsibility toward environment while choosing brands (Kotler, 2011) [10]. The study shows that proportion of non-user of green products reduced to less than one-half (Manget et al., 2009) [11]. The product market for healthy and sustainable lifestyle is increasing and the approximate value to be worth is $209 billion which includes 17% to 19% of all consumers' (Kotler, 2011) [10]. Products for this market includes- energy-efficient products, eco-tourism and solar panels etc (Kotler, 2011) [10].

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) [12]. Eco-label awareness has a positive impact on consumers' knowledge and purchase behavior (Rashid, 2009) [13]. 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) [14].

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) [15]. 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 behavior. This paper will focus on consumers' attitudes toward green products.

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

Local Environmental Awareness

Environmental awareness refers to the individual's perception of the consequences of human behavior on the environment (Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002) [16]. Local awareness refers to the local consumers' perception about the local areas environmental problems. Some researchers found positive relation between individual's environmental awareness and human behavior (e.g., Barr 2003; Grob 1995; Strong 1998) [17]. Studies show that environmental awareness act as the first step toward environmentally sensitive behavior. A. J. Roberts (1996) [18] stated in his studies that degree of environmental awareness differentiates green consumers from non-green consumers.

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

Peer influence

Many studies showed peer influence on consumer behavior. Peer group influence has an important impact on teenager's social context (Brown, 1990) [19]. Researchers suggested that peers influence each other by different ways:

- Reinforcing and punishing agents (Lamb et al., 1980) [20]
- Modeling agents (Sagotsky and Lepper, 1982) [21]
- Objects for social comparisons (Shaffer, 1994) [22]
- Value-setter for a particular idea or behavior (Shaffer,1994) [22]

The social dynamic where individual's got influenced and displays similar attributes is called homophily (Ryan, 2001) [23]. Homophily of peer group values and behavior seen in

activities like-smoking, drinking, drug use and dating (Urberg *et al.*, 1997) [24]. Except risk-taking homophily peer group influence also found for some positive activities like-GPA, college aspirations, time spent on homework, general engagement in schoolwork, academic motivation and achievement (Ryan, 2001) [23]. Chen-Yu and Seock (2002) [25] have found peer group influence especially in clothing for adolescents. It is also found in Lascu and Zinkhan, (1999) [26] study that adolescents' choice often depends on its peer group opinion. This paper focuses on to understand the peer influence on green product purchase decision.

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

Environmental Knowledge

Many studies on environmental knowledge gave mixed results and concluded by showing weak or non-significant relationship between environmental knowledge and behavior. Many research examined abstract or basic environmental knowledge whereas Schahn and Holzer (1990) [27] argues that concrete level of knowledge (specific solution-oriented behavioral knowledge) should be a necessary condition for taking the right action to protect environment. Researches concentrated more on concrete environmental knowledge of individuals reflected how individual's knowledge facilitates their behavioral commitment toward green products. Bang et al. (2000) [28] showed in their study that consumers who have more concern about environment are willing to pay more for renewable energy compare to those who have less concern about environment. This paper focuses on the local consumers' knowledge level and its impact on green product purchase.

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

Green Purchase Behavior

Purchase behavior refers to individual's style or pattern of purchasing products. This behavior depends on evaluation of the performance of the product, price, quality etc. Teng & Laroche (2007) [29] stated that having the intention to purchase a specific product requires an assessment of other products available in the market. Many marketers believe that the best way to understand consumers' purchase behavior is to understand consumers' current pattern of buying. Some marketers argue that there is a positive relation between consumers' purchase behavior and their perception of quality about the specific product/brand Sudhir and Talukdar (2004) [30] , Jaafar and Lalp (2011) [31].

V. Research Methodology

The data collection is conducted at the entrance of a mall or supermarket when customers are making their purchases. The survey is carried out by from 10th May to 30th May, 2015 in Dhaka city. The selected locations are Gulshan, Banani, Mirpur, and Uttara. The questionnaire divided into six sections to measure the attitude, local environmental awareness, peer influence, purchase behavior, environmental knowledge, and basic demographic information of the respondents. A seven point Likert scale format (ranging from 'strongly disagree = 1' to 'strongly agree =7') was adopted in this study.

This is a causal research study where the researchers has tried to identify the cause and effect of independent and dependent variables. Random sampling technique has been used to pick the sample. The sampling unit consist of consumers of Dhaka city who purchases green products. Total sample size is 200. Only 171 questionnaires were considered as valid questionnaire, while the other 26 questionnaire are considered as invalid because these respondents did not complete the questionnaire properly.

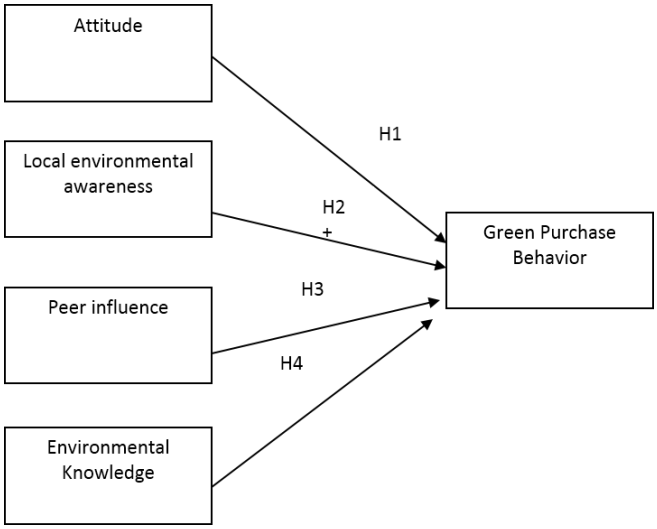


Fig. 1. A conceptual framework of green purchase behavior.

VI. Data Analysis

TABLE I: Demographic

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
Income	0 BDT TO BDT 25000	38	22.2

	BDT 25000 TO 30000	19	11.1
	BDT 30000 TO 35000	30	17.5
	BDT 35000 TO 40000	35	20.5
	BDT 40000 TO 45000	21	12.3
	OVER 45000	26	15.2

TABLE II: STANDARD FOR CRONBANCH'S ALPHA VALUE

Cronbach's Alpha	**Internal Consistency**
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent (High-Stakes testing)
$0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$	Good (Low-Stakes testing)
$0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$	Acceptable/ Sufficient
$0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable

(Ref: "Perceptions of Power" by Nadim Jahangir)

This 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.

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) [32]. Nunnally (1978)[33] recommended that the reliability of 0.50-0.60 is sufficient even though a coefficient of 0.70 or above is desirable.

Cronbach's alpha has been calculated to study the reliability of each factor in the questionnaire. The following table represents the calculated Cronbach's Alpha Values-

TABLE III: RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Variable	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha Value
Attitude	4	.746
Local Environmental Awareness	3	.818
Peer Influence	4	.718
Environmental Knowledge	3	.589
Green Purchase Behavior	3	.589

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. 746 which is good

Local Environmental Awareness: Table II, the reliability of the variable local environmental awareness has resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha .818 which is good.

Peer Influence**:** Table II, the reliability of the variable peer influence has resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha. 718 which is good.

Environmental Knowledge: Table II, the reliability of the variable environmental knowledge has resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha .589 which is poor.

Green Purchase Behavior: Table II, the reliability of the variable green purchase behavior has resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha .589 which is poor.

TABLE V: CORRELATION MATRIX

Correlations

		ATTITUDE	LOCAL	PEER	KNOWLEDGE	GREENBEHAVIOR
ATTITUDE	Pearson Correlation	1	.562**	.505**	.453**	.737**
	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
KNOWLEDGE	Pearson Correlation	.453**	.412**	.679**	1	.489**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	171	171	171	171	171
GREENBEHAVIOR	Pearson Correlation	.737**	.585**	.562**	.489**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	171	171	171	171	171

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

From the above Table V, 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.

TABLE V: REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Model Summary

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

a. Predictors: (Constant), KNOWLEDGE, LOCAL, 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%.

TABLE VI: COEFFICIENT MATRIX

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.864	.328		2.632	.009
	ATTITUDE	.453	.056	.507	8.148	.000
	LOCAL	.199	.059	.199	3.349	.001
	PEER	.145	.054	.186	2.712	.007
	KNOWLEDGE	.039	.051	.051	.766	.445

a. Dependent Variable: Greenbehavior

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.

TABLE VII: STEPWISE REGRESSION

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.737[a]	.543	.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

Regression Analysis:

From the above table of stepwise regression it is observed that the variance of dependent variable Green purchase behavior is explained by the variance of independent variable "attitude" alone by 54%. Again the variance of dependent variable green purchase behavior is explained by the variance of independent variable "peer" alone by (.591-.543) 4.8%. Finally, the variance of dependent variable green purchase behavior is explained by the variance of independent variable "Local environmental awareness" alone by (.618-.591) 2.7%. Noted that one independent variable "knowledge" does not appear in the regression equation which implies that "Environmental Knowledge" have no impact on the dependent variable.

VII. DISCUSSION

To examine the relationship of attitude, local environmental awareness, peer, knowledge, and green purchase behavior, correlation analyses were conducted between green purchase behavior and other variables. Peer influence has been found to be the strongest predictor in understanding green purchase behavior eco-friendly products. These four factors influence consumers' green purchase behavior for purchasing eco-friendly products.

Local environmental awareness is found to be the second most important predictor of green purchase behavior in Bangladesh. Local environmental awareness exerts a far greater influence on consumers green purchase behavior for buying environmentally friendly products.

The regression model shows that peer influence is the top predictor among all variable studied. While the environmental knowledge is less influential than others factors, previous studies reported on environmental knowledge is guided that environmental knowledge was operational as abstract knowledge about environmental issues/problems originating in a no significant relationship between knowledge and behavior (Lee,2011) [34]. However, the present study considers that environmental knowledge is less influential when consumers decide to purchase eco-friendly products.

This study found some tools for marketers to promote green products to influence green purchase behavior of consumers. They are-

Green marketing tools

Companies can use eco-label, eco-brand and

environmental advertisement as marketing tool to influence consumers. Implementing these tools will play an important role in changing consumer purchase behavior which will lead to purchase toward environment friendly products over artificial products (Delafrooz, Taleghani, & Nouri, 2014) [35].

Eco-labeling

According to business dictionary label displays information about a product on its container, packaging or the product itself. Eco-label is the tool that will assist consumers to take decision about purchasing environment friendly products. Eco-labels will help consumers to understand the process of the product how it was made. This label will help marketers to differentiate their product from others by labeling it as green products. In some cases, marketers want to sell with direct "label" but law oblige them to share more information with consumers (Delafrooz, Taleghani, & Nouri, 2014) [35]. Eco-label schemes was first adopted by Germany in 1977 (Blue-Angel eco-label). In modern days there are 30 various green label schemes are available worldwide which is adopted and launched their own eco-labeling schemes by different countries like- China, Japan, Korea, India, Thailand and Malaysia.

Eco-brand

Branding plays an important role in distinguishing products from competitors. Adding eco-brand feature can help consumers to distinguish environment friendly products from other non-green products (Delafrooz, Taleghani, & Nouri, 2014) [35]. Earlier research in western countries showed that in USA and Germany people take eco-brands more positively such as-green energy and body shop (Wustenhagen & Bilharz, 2006) [36]. Consumers possess positive attitude toward eco-branded products.

Environmental Advertisement

In order to strengthen the green movement marketers are focusing on environmental advertisements to grab the attention of consumers. Firstly, company will start using environment friendly positioning strategy to relate with environment. Secondly, company will show their dedication and concern to improve the environment by environmental advertisement. Thirdly, any specific project or environmental action taken by company can be promoted through environmental advertising (Rahbar & Wahid, 2011) [37]. For example-Levis jean is promoting their jean with the slogan "8 bottles, 1 jean. Waste-less".

Marketing mix for green marketing

Marketing mix consists of 4P's, they are- product, price, place and promotion. Three additional P's are used for services, they are- people, process and physical evidence. Green marketing principle states that every component of marketing mix will have a green perspective from introduction to establishment of the product in the market (Arseculeratne & Yazdanifard, 2014) [38].

VIII. Conclusion

This research has tried to draw outlines for marketers to develop strategies for green purchase behavior of green awareness, peer influence, attitude and products in respect of local environmental and environmental knowledge.

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