

FACTORS AFFECTING ON PURCHASE BEHAVIOR TOWARDS GREEN PRODUCTS AMONG GENERATION Y IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract: *This study examines the factors affecting purchase behavior towards green products among Generation Y consumers in Malaysia. Growing environmental concerns, climate change, and increasing awareness of sustainable consumption have encouraged consumers to adopt environmentally friendly products. However, despite the increasing availability of green products in Malaysian market, the level of actual purchasing behavior among generation Y remains inconsistent. Therefore, the purpose of this study to identify the key factors influencing green purchase behavior among generation Y consumers in Malaysia. This study looks at factors that affect how people buy green products through using the S-O-R theory, which is utilized in numerous behavioral studies to assess purchasing behavior. 300 respondents are included in this research from the Klang Valley area, Seremban and Nilai areas, and quantitative method is used to analyze the data. Data will be collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to generation Y consumers in Malaysia. The collected data will be analyzed using statistical techniques such as SPSS and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights into the purchasing patterns and preferences of generation Y consumers regarding green products. Additionally, this study will contribute to the existing literature on green consumer behavior and assist marketers, businesses, and policymakers in developing effective strategies to promote sustainable consumption and environmentally responsible purchasing behavior in Malaysia.*

Keywords: *Green purchase behavior, Green products, Sustainable consumption, Generation Y, S-O-R theory, PLS-SEM*

1. Introduction

Environmental problems are one of the root causes in businesses for implementing green practices. Global warming, different types of pollution, climate change etc. are some major concerns that are raised internationally important and consumers are taking it seriously to overcome this global challenge (Gurlek & Koseoglu, 2021; Kovacs & Keresztes, 2022). This trend has led to the rising prominence of green influences. In fact, those critical environmental problems created a demand for consumers to take consideration towards environmental protection and businesses to implement green marketing strategies in their business (Ogiemwonyi & Jan, 2023). Consumers are changing their behavior considering sustainability values and they tend to show their environmental commitment towards environmental responsibility. In global perspective, effective green strategies have gained a positive attention and trust towards consumers' purchase behavior (Timsit & Kaplan, 2021). Nowadays

environmental policy becomes one of the important topics in businesses in Malaysia and many companies are emphasizing their marketing policies considering environmental protection. In turn, consumers are also showing their interest towards environmental protection and willingly participate in companies' green policies or green campaigns (Rusli et al., 2022). Most educated young people in Malaysia still don't have enough concept about green products. It shows that young people don't commonly choose green products when they shop, even though they know about environmental issues. This study investigates the factors affecting green purchase behavior among Generation Y consumers in Malaysia. The target population comprises Malaysian Millennials, defined as individuals born between 1981 and 1996. The research focuses on consumers' purchasing behavior toward green products, including environmentally friendly food, household, personal care and consumer goods.

2. Literature review

There are several problems that have limited consumers' attitudes, actions and social acceptance. To demonstrate their environmental responsibilities and goals, it is important that consumers be aware of their environmental footprint and ready to take the necessary measures to protect the ecosystem while also being interested in purchasing a product that aligns with their values and goals. The market share of the global green products market is only 8% and is falling (Market Research Report, 2021), which slows down sustainable consumption and the growth of green products. So, in order to achieve responsible consumption, it is important to identify the elements that influence green purchase behavior (GPB).

With Malaysia's economy expanding quickly, people are starting to recognize the value of sustainable practices and their benefits. But there are various factors that affect their growth and therefore, market control and demand for sustainable products may not be predictable. Despite the positive action mentioned, studies in Malaysia and other developing countries still need to know the current factors that affect the GPB as consumers' preferences for eco-friendly products are ever changing. This study narrows the gap by analyzing the TPB and TRA together with other factors that existed around the same time as TPB and TRA: Subjective norms, Environmental concern, eWOM, Environmental attitude and Consumer engagement. Integrating TPB and TRA theory and finally implementing S-O-R theory to explain factors influencing green behavior toward purchasing eco-friendly products is one of the innovative contributions. Second, to look into how EA and CE affect the GPB nexus and independent components. There is also a theoretical framework in this study, which can also aid in ethical consumption. This will add to the body of literature on green behavior in a new context and help to create a new strategy.

The SOR (Stimulus-Organism-Response) framework is used to enhance understanding and analysis of consumer product engagement and make a relationship between consumers' green purchase behavior and related factors. This model illustrates people's thinking about the environment while purchasing green products. In 1974, Mehrabian and Russell came up with the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model. Since then, it has been utilized in many fields to investigate how people act. This theory suggests that external cues (stimuli) can trigger an individual's internal evaluation, which can lead to either positive or negative response.

The S-O-R theory is an ideal fit for the present study. First, the S-O-R theory has not been applied to explain the purchasing behavior of green products before (Tandon et al., 2023) but has been used to research the antecedents of persons' pro-environmental behaviors (Gradinaru et al., 2022, Lavuri et al., 2022; Kaur et al., 2022). The theory focuses on the importance of affective-cognitive processes in determining an individual's attitudes and perceptions towards

external stimuli, which affect intentions and actions (Han et al., 2022). Second, considering the significant role of green psychological benefits in shaping environmentally friendly behavior (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibanez, 2012; Bhutto et al., 2022b), it should be studied in the context of green products, but this has not happened in board area. The effects of green psychological benefits on cognitive state (attitude) and then on green purchase intention and behavior may be considered from the viewpoint of S-O-R theory. Third, Mansoor et al. (2021) proposed that the S-O-R model indicates that the organism (O) can help act as a mediator between stimulus (S) and responses (R). In this study, the direct relationships and its mediation between green products, attitude and purchase behavior are investigated.

3. Research Methodology

This research uses positive ontology, quantitative research technique and employs the conceptual framework to evaluate hypotheses. The primary purpose is to formulate generalizations that augment theory and facilitate comprehension, prediction, and clarification of the phenomena under investigation. This research posits the existence of fundamental rules and principles that regulate the functioning of the world. Its primary obligation when delineating these criteria is to maintain a separation from the respondents. Second, the facts need to be written down and shown after the norms and principles have been set. Finally, while looking at the data, reliable and verified statistical methods that don't introduce bias or guesswork are utilized.

In the current study, the relationships that are investigated are those among the parts of the study and are conducted from a survey approach. This is mostly because secondary data that accurately depicts the variables of interest in Malaysia is not readily available. Also, the strategy is chosen considering the needs of resources, such as the time, financial resources and access to data. This study uses six constructs, and several questions are used to test each element. The study's measures are modified and validated from previous studies using a 5-point Likert scale. Before the research instrument is finalized, a pilot study will be conducted on thirty respondents from academia and industry to ensure clarity and validate its validity. Participants will have a chance to voice their thoughts and understand how unambiguous the questions are. Participants will be informed that their comments will only be used for research purposes and will be given privacy assurances. Based on expert input, the final questionnaire will be developed after the pilot phase with a few minor modifications.

Probability sampling is the sample technique employed in this study, where individuals are chosen at random and have an equal chance of being chosen. Survey techniques in descriptive research will be used to collect primary data for this investigation. In order to collect primary data, a self-administered survey will be employed. An online survey consisting of a number of questionnaires are created using Google Forms and will be sent to university students in person or through WeChat, Telegram, and WhatsApp. Two months will be spent gathering data for this study. Examining the elements that affect different customer types' green purchasing behavior will be the main objective of this study. Young individuals (Generation Y) with some product experience and a considerable amount of awareness about green consumption are supposed to be the research participants.

4. Data Analysis

This study included both descriptive and inferential analysis to finish the data analysis process. The initial study objective is to evaluate Malaysian Generation Y's level of green purchasing

behavior using descriptive analysis. Inferential analysis, which includes regression and correlation analysis, may be used to achieve the second study aim, which is to identify the connections between eWOM, environmental concerns, and subjective norms on green buying behavior. These analyses help to simplify the analytical process and provide the results in an understandable manner. All statistical analyses, including descriptive, reliability, normality, and inferential analyses, will be carried out using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), a well-known software program for social scientific data analysis. Furthermore, PLS-SEM techniques will be used in this research which is emerging as a statistical modeling technique.

5. Conclusion

This research examines the extent of green purchasing behavior among Malaysia's generation Y and also looks at how different factors affect green shopping behavior. This study may be a more beneficial resource for future academics or relevant authorities on what makes young people buy green products. Also, businesses may learn more about what young people really want and make eco-friendly goods that fulfil their demands. The study results may also help firms make and market the benefits of utilizing eco-friendly goods, which would encourage more people to purchase them as part of their green lifestyle. The analyses of the present study will rejuvenate the extensive and diverse research examining consumers' environmental behavior, especially on their desire to purchase eco-friendly items in Malaysian setting. Moreover, the results of the present study will be beneficial for researchers, entrepreneurs, and policymakers in formulating new methods for green marketing in Malaysia and other Asian nations.

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