

A STUDY ON Y-GENERATION'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS GREEN PRODUCTS PURCHASE IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

The green issue is being debated by communities throughout the world. Environmental issues such as air or water pollution, sound pollution, and the unexpected climate change the ozone deficiency and their unwanted effects on environment are quite well informed to individuals. This research is to identify the Y generation's purchasing attitude of green products in Malaysia. The research background will discuss details of green products and Y generation's definition in Malaysia. Examining the measure of consumers' green purchase behavior would lead to a better understanding of green product acceptance and hence will lead to a more friendly environment. It has been suggested that increased awareness of environmental impacts could lead to more responsible decision purchased behavior towards green products.

Keywords: *Green Products; Y-Generation; Green Purchase; Purchase Intension.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The quality life of Malaysian will be increased due to the increase of national economic development and maintain the integrity of environment. Other than that, the property sector also has seen the concern in environmental development which involved in the development of green buildings such as the 1First Avenue. Not only that, several years back the Hypermarket chains like Jusco and Tesco have adopted the No Plastic Bag Day policy on Saturdays and Sunday in order to reduce the usage on plastic. In Melaka also, they also adopted the policy for every day. According to the slogan "Melaka Maju Negeriku Sayang, Negeri Bandar Teknologi Hijau" that has been chosen is to reflect the passion and mission on achieving the Melaka country's vision 2020.

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The corporate sector such as Sime Darby and Digi has joined in with campaigns such as Plant a Tree Program and Mangrove-Saving Project respectively.

1.1. Background of study

In the recent time, consumers concern toward environmental issues has becoming noted where they realize that their purchase intention will be able to influence the environment. Desan (2009) stated that The Obama administration in the U.S. was disclosed to have spent USD150 billion in sustainability of environment investment plan of clean energy, hybrid cars and renewable power. As we know environmental threats are disturbing local governments and citizens, Asian region also taken the responsibility to sustain the environment through embracing the power of going-green (Lee, 2008). For example, Malaysia government has involved in promoting the going green conception through establish The Malaysian Green Technology Policy which is the nation's commitment to the vision of a Green Malaysia a reality. This policy serves to advocate sustainable development and speed up the national economy by seeking to promote the right way for energy use.

Due to fast-growing economy in Asia, the purchasing power of Asia is increase compared to previous generation. (Li and Su, 2007). Research by Vision 2010 shows many countries have raised the environment awareness and they are willing to purchase the green product which has less harmful effect product against environment. There are numerous of research studies found that nowadays consumers are more concern and conscious about environmental impact of their consumption (Gary et al., 2012).

The present research shows that consumers who aware must live in balance with environment choose products that create less pollution, make efforts to recycle, limits their use of products made from scares resources and in general attempt to make ecologically correct decisions about the products they buy. The behaviors shown not suggest the consumer is not using a product all together, but instead is selecting products and activities that will have less impact on environment.

1.1. Green Products and Green Consumers

The research study of Nimse et al., (2007) defined green products as those that use recyclable materials, least wastage, and reduce the use of water and energy, and generate less toxic substances. In other words, green products which known as environmentally friendly or ecological products are bringing less harmful effect to human and environment with offer more long-term practical development opportunities from a social and economic perspective. Example of green products is alternative fuel vehicles and hybrids, Solar Photovoltaic, organic agricultures, green or organic personal care items and beauty products.

Soonthonsmai (2007) shows Green consumers can be defined as people who are caring and paying attention in environmental issues. In green consumer mind is full of environmental concern and issues, and think that they owned responsibility toward the environmental care. Further explain by Euromonitor (2008), defined that green consumers are those who are always purchase the product which bringing the less impact to environment consistently. These consumers may focus on brand product which is eco-friendly packaging, corporate who practicing the fair trade or environmental practices such as The Body Shop and Starbucks, or buying organic products. Makower (2007) found that green consumers are sometimes thought to be younger, better educated and more upscale than their non-green counterparts. The study also shows that the greenest consumers are represent by the youth group which aged 17-25 year olds.

1.1. Y-Generations

Y-generation, also known as the Millenials, or Echo Boomers, are those individuals born from the early 1980s until the 2000s. There are approximately 76 million members of this generation, making them the largest age cohort to move through the marketplace since the Baby Boomers which is at 77 million (Joanna et al., 2015). The literature suggests that Generation Y is more than three times the size of Generation X, and it is the largest consumer market in America since the Baby Boomers (Dawn et al., 2013). They are higher educated than earlier generations, highly competent users of information and communication technologies (ICTs), and accustomed to the world of social media.

Generation Y is a unique and influential consumer group whose behavior is often discussed but not fully understood (Smith, 2012). Heavily influenced by technology and the internet, this consumer cohort has evolved differently from previous generations making, it a challenging group to target (Dawn et al., 2013).

2. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

2.1. Green Purchase Intention

The customer's willingness and like hood to favor environmentally friendly goods over regular products in their purchase decision are the definition of the green purchase intention and Joshi and Rahman (2015a) has agreed this definition. There are the concept that green purchase intention is the probability and willingness of an individual to give preference to green products over conventional products in their purchase considerations.

Moreover, it becomes obvious that studies often differentiate between the determinants that can influence the green purchase intention of consumers (Liobikienė et al., 2017).

Consumers around the world have become more environmentally aware recently, leading to a green revolution and demands to prevent further damage to the environment. It is important to understand green consumers purchasing behavior and trends in order to predict why customers purchase for green products.

2.2. Decision Purchase Behavior of Green Product



Fig. 1: Adapted from Ng,K. (n.d.). Beyond Keyword Research: Why You Should Be Looking at Consumer Behavior.

In first stage of decision making is awareness of a need of green product decision purchase behavior simplify that consumer may assume to take a choices to fulfil their physiological and psychological need. This is the prior of every purchase decision and can be stimulated by a need or want to buy eco-friendly product. According to Hoyer and MacInnis, (2010) when consumers realize they have needs that are not satisfied, they need recognition. Recognition of the problem is the first step that occurs when users realize there is a desire for something new to be met in the purchase decision process of users (Kardes, et al., 2011).

Hoyer and MacInnis (2010) and Kardes, et al., (2011) once a problem is recognized, consumers begin to explore about relevant information. Second stages is information search. In this stage of the buyer decision process, it's vital that consumer brand is at the forefront of consumer's minds, or at the forefront of where consumer will seek information. Conducting this exploration will help consumer in the information search phase and allow consumer to determine which eco-friendly product and what features are available. Not only is it important to be visible for the keyword but it's also important to understand where customers go for information through searching Google or visiting review sites.

By the (2008) mention that consumer would consider the best alternative to meet their need. Third stage of decision making is evaluating alternatives. At this stage consumers are finished feeling out the market and have developed a consideration set. Depending on the product and the industry, most consumers have a consideration set of about 3-5 different brands or products.

Besides that, Hawkins & Mothersbaugh (2010) also said that selections make a purchase decision is influenced by the information obtained from different sources. It is a strategies try to catch consumers at this stage of the purchase process. However, if company has not done due diligence up to this point, eco-friendly brand or product will not be in the consideration set, therefore potentially ruining consumer chances of making a sale. To this point, if eco-friendly brand has reached the consumer at each stage of the decision process consumer chances of making a sale are much higher.

At the last stage, post purchase of the decision process have the opportunity to continue relationship with customer. This is where customers determine their satisfaction level of the eco-friendly product. The opportunity to encourage customers to write evaluations on eco-friendly product and turn them into repeat customers. Consumers start comparing perceptions of their products with their expectations of a product (Kardes, et al., 2011).

All stages of the purchase decision process are important, and it's important to have a strategy surrounding each stage of the process. The majority of previous research focus on the purchase decision phase, by the time the consumer is in that stage it may be too late.

2.3. Attitudes toward Green Purchase

The purchase decisions are described in forms of supporting green companies, purchasing green products (Albayrak et al., 2013) adopting sustainable consumption practices (Gadenne et al., 2011) and likely to spend more for green products (Essoussi and Linton, 2010). The purchase decisions of green consumers are influenced by broadly two factors. One set of factors are intrinsic to the consumers such as realization of their environmental responsibilities, quest for gaining knowledge, self-interest and willingness to act for resource conservation and reduced impact on the environment. And, the others are extrinsic to the consumers which are related to, for example, social image of consumers and product characteristics (such as product quality, safety, performance, price, promotion and impact on human health). The actual behaviour is a result of consumers' regular habits, their product knowledge and the situational factors such as promotional campaign (Vermeir and Verbeke, 2004).

2.4. Attitudes toward the Environment

Over the course of many years, environmental concern has increasingly become a subject of interest for academics and marketing practitioners. The cause underlying this interest is that individuals who are more concerned about the environment are also more likely to display environmentally friendly behaviour (Czap and Czap, 2010). Many researchers assume that people with high levels of environmental concern, are more likely to exhibit environmentally conscious consumer behaviour (Czap and Czap, 2010). For example, Tahir et al. (2013) found in their study that consumers who were more concerned about the environment expressed a willingness to pay more for renewable energy than those who were less concerned about the environment. Opposed to some positive results in the literature, many of the research results on the effects of environmental concern on environmentally sensitive behaviour are mostly insignificant. The majority of studies which measure the direct effects of environmental concern on environmentally sensitive behaviour show that the relationships between these variables are low to moderate. For example, in his study, Bamberg (2003) states that general attitudes are important indirect determinants of specific behaviours, so environmental concern has no direct effect on behaviour and intentions; however, it has a direct effect on the perception and evaluation of situation specific cognition, especially when the individual faces personal consequences according to his/her own behaviours.

2.5. Social influence

Previous studies have indicated that social influences, such as subjective norms, exert a positive effect on recycling intentions (Park and Ha, 2012) and intentions to purchase sustainable and environmentally friendly products (Yan et al., 2012). However, previous related empirical studies have only partially examined such factors. No particular study has combined two approaches to explain consumer intentions to purchase green products. An integrated understanding of whether both social and personal factors affect green purchase intentions remains lacking. Moreover, beyond subjective norms, environmental visibility is expected to affect green purchasing intentions because the value of an activity increases as the number of people involved rises. Although researchers have suggested that visibility is critical because it influences individual behaviour (Lepoutre and Heene, 2006), the effects of environmental visibility on green purchasing behaviour have not been investigated.

In addition, another influencer which able to bring huge impact on purchases intention is social media. Commonly, young consumers are greatly influenced by their social network that they maintain. Initially, they collect information from their social network and in the end they will decide about

their brand choice. A survey has been conducted by Ad-logy Research (Business Wire, 2009) which to study online, traditional and social media influence on buying decisions. The survey has found that social media and online media have significant impact on their purchase intention. For instance social networking; Google, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, etc. can influence the purchase intention of people to purchase for green products.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopted an explanatory studies where research conducted for a problem that has not been clearly defined or need more approval for certain information. Studies that establish causal relationship between variable may be termed as explanatory research. Explanatory research test whether one event causes other. It implies as adjustment in X (the cause) on changes in Y (the impacted). The purpose of this research is to increase the understanding of a researcher on a certain subject or tasks given and also to seek clarifications of the nature of specific connections. Therefore, explanatory studies help to determine the best research design, data collection method and the right information needed to accomplish this study.

Target population is an entire group of people, events or things of interest that need to be investigated and surveyed in a research. The process should begin with targeting the appropriate target population, thus, the respondents of this research will be Malaysia youth who are between 17 to 25 years old. The reason for targeting on this segment in this study is because younger people are likely to purchase environmentally sensitive products to make the environment safer for their next generations. Moreover, youth nowadays are knowledgeable and concerned about the environment because of more environmental education have be given since in school. Furthermore, this group of people represents the potential consumer that have an interest on purchasing green products which they think will minimize harmful of environment. This can help to analyze the intention influencing them in purchase green products more accurately.

This research method use probability random sampling research strategy to collect information on the respondent to investigate the Y-Generation attitudes towards purchase green product in Malaysia. Thus the respondent in this study will be randomly from all ages between 17 to 25 and researcher applied the questionnaires to gather the information by using the same set of questions to the respondents.

Besides that this study conducts a few types of data analysis to identify all factors that are explanatory analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The data analysis is identifying all option in dependent variable. According to this

research, regression examined by the company performance as dependent variable (DV) with the independent variables (IV) that consist three variables which is green supply chain management, organization culture and supply chain integration. This final process shows how two variables are related to each other.

4. RESULTS

Result from the descriptive statistical analysis methods indicates that in overall, respondent agreed that all the independent variables which is attitude towards green purchase, attitude towards environment and attitude towards social influence.

This study was conducted to have better understanding Y-Generation attitudes towards purchase green products and clarify which type of attitudes that can influence their decision making. This study has achieved its objectives to identify the most influence type of attitudes and the relationship the three variable concerning on Y-Generation decision purchased toward green products.

After testing Pearson Correlation Analysis, Descriptive Analysis and Multiple Regression Analysis result showed that two independent variables have strong correlation relationship with the Y generation intention to purchase green product which is attitude towards green purchase and attitude towards social influence. For attitude towards environment shown the moderate correlation relationship. Next is Multiple Regression Analysis had shown the independent variables had a significant relationship. In addition, this chapter also states the attitude towards environment was remove based on the relationship and p-value was shown rejected analysis.

As a conclusion, in the second test, multiple regression used that indicate that attitude towards green purchase is the most important type that can influence Y-Generation to purchase green products and remove attitudes towards environment. This study provides information for those who may want to investigate more on the type of attitudes that can enhance Y-Generation purchasing green products.

A multiple regression was conducted to examine how all the variable are related to the dependent variable. In order to determine the most influencing attitude of Y-Generation in purchasing green products, R and R square discussed the correlation coefficient and variation in dependent variable. The R value in this study show was 0.841a, it shown this study has value. Meanwhile R square has been stated as 70.8% all the independent variable contributes to the dependent variable.

Besides that, after testing for the coefficient multiple regression analysis of each variable, the result show the highest attitude that most influence Y-Generation in purchasing green product is attitude towards green purchase compare with others variables. The result for this variable is 0.532 beta value and its significant is 0.000. Next higher attitude that can influence is attitude towards social influence with the beta value 0.368 and the significant value is 0.000. And lastly is attitude towards environment has been rejected from this study because of the result is 0.053 beta value and 0.263 significant value. As the conclusion from the result, it shown that attitude towards green purchase and attitude towards social influence are the most significant influence with dependent variable.

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