Chapter 9
The Green Consumer Revolution:
A Study on Sustainable Product Preferences

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ABSTRACT

Over the past few years, eco-friendly and sustainable consumption has become the focus of a rising trend, fueled by rising environmental awareness and the need to adopt such practices. People are increasingly aware that their products lead to environmental degradation (pollution) and are considering purchasing green products. This study aims to understand environmentally conscious consumers' preferences and behaviours towards such products. This study offers business and policy contributions by identifying the drivers of eco-conscious consumer choices and beginning to engage with an emerging and significant market segment. In addition, obstacles and limitations that hinder companies from adopting eco-friendly products and sustainable practices were identified. This study's findings will reinforce the momentum of environmental consciousness of consumption by providing information regarding strategies for sustainable product development, marketing, and policy making.

1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behavior has been shown to impact the environment in recent years because of its direct effect on purchase decisions. Recently, heightened environmental awareness among consumers has played an important role in encouraging the market's growth for sustainable green products (Khader, 2019). Approximately 70% of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide are related to consumer decisions. Among other reasons, consumers are turning to \"green\" due to climate change, health issues, and degradation

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-0608-7.ch009

of the environment. Shopping alternatives and increased demand for sustainable products (Dangelico & Pontrandolfo, 2010).

Purchasing environmentally friendly products is particularly significant among the many choices people have to make a positive environmental impact. Environmental outcomes (White et al., 2019) depend on the type of items chosen, their patterns of use, and disposal. With growing consumer awareness, businesses have developed products marketed as 'green' while retaining functionality to promote greener choices without compromising practicality (D'Souza et al., 2006).

Nevertheless, there are several challenges in moving toward sustainable consumption. In other words, many consumers find green products too ambiguous or difficult to identify because of awareness gaps, information overload, and a changing marketplace. However, the important work that sustainability labels (or eco-labels), such as those claimed by Greenpeace, Free From Toxic Chemicals, and the EPA, do is to act as simple guides for consumers to build trust in brands and eventually promote genuine green product choices.

Green thinking is a popular watchword for consumers, with many in the market for premium products so long as they describe them as eco-friendly. Nevertheless, stated intentions do not bridge the gap between expressed intentions and actual purchasing behavior. Not all environmentally friendly features will be used without properly aligning the consumer's behavior and the product's design (Kumar et al., 2017). This risk is heightened because it is tied to human behavior, which is closely related to environmental issues (Baca Motes et al., 2013; Steg, 2005).

1.1 Research Gap and Objectives

Although there is a considerable body of literature on green consumption, there is an enormous void in understanding the intricate interrelationship between awareness, disposition, and actual purchasing behavior in various product categories and market segments. Consequently, most previous studies have addressed consumers' separate behaviors and strategies rather than their co-dependent relationship.

The following research objectives bridge this gap.

This study investigates the key factors affecting consumer choices for green products.

2. To explain environmental awareness in sustainable consumption behaviors.
3. My research objective centers on marketing strategies for environmentally friendly products to consumers.
4. This study investigated the barriers to consumers' adoption of sustainable consumption practices.
5. This study aimed to determine how businesses adjust to the green consumer revolution.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

To ensure credibility, a systematic literature review and empirical research were combined. The systematic review followed PRISMA guidelines for searching databases, such as the Web of Science, Scopus, ScienceDirect, EBSCO, Emerald Insight, and Google Scholar databases. After screening for relevance and quality, 112 articles were included in the final analysis, starting from an initial 1,247 articles.