



Influence of Gender and Age with Consumers ‘Green Behavior’

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Authors’ contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. Author URV wrote the draft of the manuscript, collected the data, wrote the literature and performed the statistical analysis. Author VK helped in the in the preparation of the manuscript, interpretation and supervised the overall work. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The demographic profiles of consumers play a vital role in ascertaining the buying habits, sources of information, and other factors that may affect product/brand choice etc. One of the objectives of the present study therefore was also to identify the relationship of selected demographic variables viz. gender and age with green consumer behaviour. It is pertinent to such relationships, since India is an emerging economic powerhouse, and its middle class rising to prosperity. This study was therefore conducted to understand the age and gender factors influence on the consumer green behaviour. The subjects were contacted from the four directions of Udaipur city. The data on background information, green consumer behaviour was put to suitable analysis, to be precise, frequency and percentages, t-test and correlation analysis to draw the results.

Keywords: Age; gender; green consumer behaviour; sustainability; environmental concern.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The environmental issues are bigger than the changes the gigantic human actions stir off to the basic physical and biological systems. Indian environment has deteriorated remarkably in the past few years [1]. Many people are ignorant about the threats of climate change; people are unable to consider the threats to be real enough to impact them in their personal lives and are unaware of the fact that caring for the environment is their responsibility. There are different factors and characteristics which exhibits positive or negative impact on consumer buying behaviour. Understanding the factors helps in purchasing behaviour and lessening the environmental issues. Previous research studies stated that age and gender are one of the factors connected with the consumer life cycle that influences consumer buying behavior [2].

Consumer behaviour depends on socio-demographic factors, and cultural differences and human perceptions. People behave individually with the circumstances and no two individuals are same, it is applicable for the roles of men and women. Age and Gender has an important role in consumer behavior. Differences between men and women depends on the lifestyle, region and demographic variables thus reflects on the decision-making behavior [3]. Based on the background description this study focuses on age and gender influence on green consumption.

1.1 Review of Literature

Various literature on green consumerism reveals diverse classification towards different variables influence on environmental issues. These led to focus more on those factors and study their influence in green purchasing decisions.

The demographic profiles of consumers play a vital role in ascertaining the buying habits, sources of information, and other factors that may affect product/brand choice etc [4]. It is pertinent to such relationships, since India is an emerging economic powerhouse, and its middle class rising to prosperity. It is important to identify the relationship of selected demographic variables viz. gender and age with green consumer behaviour.

Then, Pudaruth et al. [5] stated that gender is defined on the basis of male and female biological characteristics, they exhibit different

characters by nature. Compared to men, women tend to choose green products and are more conscious about their health and safety.

Later, Wei et al. [6] explained that there was a marked difference between men's and women's attitudes towards buying green products. In addition, they challenged the notion of the assumed inherent difference between gender groups because of differences in biological make-up and contrasts in social experiences [7,8].

Koller et al. [9] and Miniero et al. [10] noted the different features of green and non-green consumers. To understand green consumers better, they felt it is necessary to investigate their characteristics, gender and their personalities, their lifestyle, and their motivations. Many authors have focused on the influence of individual differences and personal traits on ecological behaviour.

1.2 Age

Socio demographic characteristics such as age and gender shows impact on purchase intention of the green products and concern towards environmental friendly products.[11] feels that age is an important demographic factor that influence the consumption behaviour. Environmental beliefs and behaviour patterns may vary depending on the age factor while choosing green products.

Slaba [12] through her research stated that age is one of the factor for consumer buying behaviour and attitude of the customer to price. Older age group tends to be the most-sensitive group in consumption pattern. Her Analysis also stated that there exist significant differences among different age groups.

Morison and Beer [13] conducted a study and reviewed that older persons were more environmentally concerned compared to the younger and middle aged groups, also found out that there is a relationship between the age and purchasing behaviour.

Wiernik et al.[14] observed that older individuals may show less environmentally-responsible actions due to existing habits and cultural variations. They also exhibit unwillingness in adoption of new practices.

Teng and Ow [15] stated that older generation have a tendency to buy more buying green

products than younger generation as they tend to spend more time on reading and invest themselves in recycling. New products and innovative ideas on green products are easily accepted by the younger generation.

2. METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in the urban areas of Udaipur district of Rajasthan. The sample of the study was selected randomly from the latest electoral role of Urban Udaipur. For this, an equal number of subjects, that is 50 respondents (25 males and 25 females) each from four direction of city: East, West, South and North were selected with the help of screening pro-forma consisting of basic minimal enquiries essential to screen the subjects such as name, age, education, income, involvement in purchase decision making and a willingness to be the subject of the present study for taking responses on 'Personal and Environmental Antecedents of Green Consumer Behaviour'. This made the total sample of 100 males and 100 females for the study.

The subjects were contacted from the four directions of Udaipur city. Data collection was done by the investigator personally. Data regarding respondents' family background and green consumer behavior was collected, using the tools developed for the purpose. The data on background information, green consumer behaviour was put to suitable analysis, to be precise, frequency and percentages, t-test and correlation analysis to draw results.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Gender

Men and women attitude is not similar due to their different upbringing and socialization along with various other social, biological and psychological factors depicts different types of behaviour at various situations. Whether it is decision making in personal life or professional life, whether it is about shopping or consuming both the genders are completely different at every stage of decision making.

Right from need recognition through the evaluation of alternatives to the post purchase behaviour, men and women work differently with different types of stimuli and use different parameters of evaluation. Women seem to have satisfaction and find pleasure while shopping

where as men appear to be more disdain. Men and women work differently with different type of stimuli and different parameters of evaluation. This affects the purchasing behaviour of a consumer. Women think of purchasing in an interpersonal, human fashion and men treat it as more instrumental.[2].

Table 1, has data on gender distribution of green consumers according to their levels of 'greenness'. The table shows that majority of consumers of both the gender i.e. female and male consumers' for the sections as well as total scale, are clustering at grade II, which means that their scores were ranging between 51 and 100 scores for personal section (62 percent female and 59 percent of male consumers) and environmental section (93 percent female and 94 percent of male consumers) , whereas these were ranging between 101 and 200 scores for the total scale (84 percent female and 90 percent of male consumers). While rest of the consumers for all the three assessments rested at Grade I.

To study the significance of difference between 'greenness' of the male and female consumers' scores of personal and environmental sections and the total scale, student's 't' test was administered . The 't' values are given in Table 2, it is evident from the 't' values given in the table, that no significant difference was found between the scores provided by female and male consumers for personal antecedents, environmental antecedents and total scale of green consumer behaviour. The 't' values indicate that there was no significance difference in the intensity of greenness in the behaviour consumers due to gender, this result is similar to the results of [16,17] where they noted that gender has no influence on the buying behavior.

Generally, the literature speaks that while purchasing a product, females and males have their own tastes and preferences [18]. Females are more likely to intend to purchase green products because they are more concerned about environmental attitudes and environmental concerns compared to male consumers environmental ethics, issues, and values than men [19]. A research by [15] indicated that female consumers have a higher purchase intention for an environmentally friendly food product than male consumers. It is shown in their research that gender has a strong relationship with purchase intention.

However, the studies conducted outside the country have indicated such a difference, viz.

Gifford and Nilsson [20] observed that female consumers were more sensitive towards environmental issues and were also willing to pay more for eco friendly products. According to [21] women and men behave differently in the process of consumption. Since they perform different roles in every household they have different demands for certain products. Women look for information. [22] comments, marketing strategies also differentiate gender buying behavior such as female are more emotional and easily be attracted by advertisements compared to male.

3.2 Age

Every age has its own state of mind, Age is the time period a person or thing has survived till date. Age is a sign of existence. Age brings knowledge. Every phase of life to be important since every stage of life is equally important. Every age has its own essence, its own perception and its own characteristics. Age and consumer behaviour are interrelated. A buyer may or may not be a consumer but his behaviour decides it all. Different age groups displays different purchasing behaviour. The way a consumer chooses green products through availability, marketing place, product quality, post-purchasing services, benefits and environmental concern effects the buying behaviour of consumer.

Another association that was to be studied was between age and level of greenness in the consumers' behaviour. The distribution of

consumers according to their age (Fig. 1) has been given in Table 1 of section I of this chapter, in this section the analysis of the relationship between age group and level of greenness in the consumers' behaviour is being reported. To assess the relationship between age and level of greenness in the consumers' behaviour the coefficient of correlation was calculated with age of the consumers and scores provided by consumers for personal antecedents, environmental antecedents and total scale of green consumer behaviour.

The values of Karl Pearson coefficient of correlation are given in Table 3. It is evident from the table that the values of correlation coefficient calculated between the age of consumers and the scores provided by them for personal section, environmental section and total scale of green consumer behaviour are all non-significant. This indicates that no significant relationship of age with greenness in consumers' behaviour was observed. Although, [21] claims that consumer behavior change comes through age and justifies it, that since the older the person the more purchasing experience they have than the younger one. Similarly, Based on the previous research by [23,24] it was demonstrated that age has an impact on buying products here it was mentioned that younger people make simpler product purchasing decisions compared to older people whose purchasing decisions are more complex because they are more exposed environmental issues have awareness over the period of time [25].

Table 1. Gender distribution of green consumers

Scale	Grading	Range of score	Female (n=100)	Male (n=100)
Personal section	GRADE I	101-150	38	41
	GRADE II	51-100	62	59
	GRADE III	0-50	NIL	NIL
Environmental Section	GRADE I	101-150	7	6
	GRADE II	51-100	93	94
	GRADE III	0-50	NIL	NIL
Total scale	GRADE I	0-100	16	10
	GRADE II	101-200	84	90
	GRADE III	201-300	NIL	NIL

N=200

Table 2. 't' values for comparing the GCB scores among male and female consumers

Scale	't' cal
Personal section	0.160333
Environmental section	0.123852
Total scale	0.280783

- Non Significant values

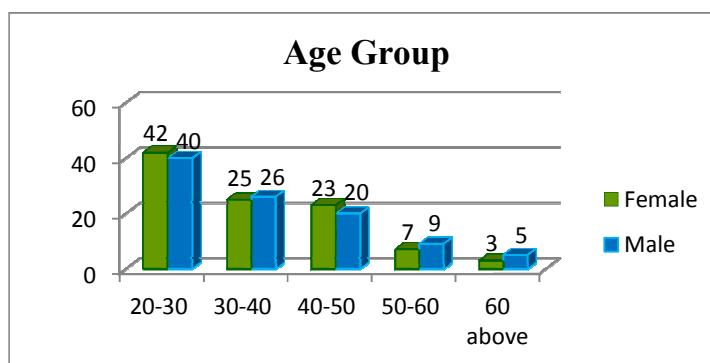


Fig. 1. Age group

Table 3. Coefficients of correlation showing Relationship of age with greenness in behaviour of consumers

S.No.	Age	Correlation coefficient		
		Personal Section	Environmental Section	Total Scale
1.	20-30	0.038256	0.088951	-0.02892
2.	31-40	-0.15744	-0.2154	0.017231
3.	41-50	-0.18505	0.150469	-0.31565
4.	51-60	-0.39918	-0.30823	0.228441
5.	60 above	0.311586	0.184396	0.276063

Non Significant values

Age has an important influence on the attitude towards purchasing a product or a service [26]. Certainly, it has been said that the exhibition of consumer behaviour depends on the age [3,27] also revealed that age is significantly correlated to the green product purchasing behaviour. But no such correlation was observed in the present study.

4. CONCLUSION

The difference in the results of present research on both gender and age may be associated to various factors. Firstly, the difference may be due to the reason that majority of the available researches are not conducted in Indian settings as the present research. Secondly, due to lack environmental awareness and sensitivity among general masses. Studying the differences between age and gender will give comprehensive understanding in the context of cultural differences between markets and hence, it emphasis manufacturers and practitioners' to consider those differences to meet the global diversity.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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