



# A STUDY ON THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN ON GREEN PURCHASE INTENTION IN GUWAHATI CITY

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## Abstract

The rise in environmentalism in the recent times has led organisations to shift towards sustainable practices and subsequently to the growth in green marketing. One of the dimensions of green marketing involves providing green products which are not harmful to the environment. The present paper studies the relationship of consumers' environmental concern with their green purchase intention in the city of Guwahati. Data was collected amongst the students and was analysed using Pearson correlation matrices. The results revealed a significant and positive relationship between environmental concern and green purchase intention.

**Keywords:** *environmental concern, green products, green marketing, environment*

## Introduction

The fast pace of economic development in the various countries have brought with itself several environmental problems as well. Problems such as pollution, ozone layer depletion, effects of green house gases are common phenomenon in the various industrialized nations in the world. In order to counter these problems, organisations have now come up with a new concept known as green marketing. In simple terms, green marketing means adopting those business practices which do not harm the environment. This includes changes in the production process, modifying the products, distribution, pricing and promotion methods in order to safeguard the environment. The products so modified or newly introduced which are not harmful to the environment are termed as green or sustainable or eco friendly products.

India with its rapid economic growth rate has also been facing various environmental issues. This can be tackled only if consumers in India adapt to greener products and practices. The concept of green marketing is still at early stages in India and specially the isolated north eastern states with researches being conducted only in the recent times. In order to make consumers adapt to greener practices, researches related to understanding consumers' purchase intention and behaviour towards green products is required. Studies conducted worldwide have found various factors affecting consumers' green purchase intention. One of the factors that have been identified is environmental concern. Environmental concern refers to consciousness of the people regarding environmental issues and their desire to solve them. In this paper, the researcher has selected environmental concern as a factor in predicting consumer green purchase intention. The present study is carried out in the city of Guwahati in understanding the consumers' green purchase intention with regard to their environmental concerns.

## Literature Review

**Mostafa, (2007)** investigated the influence of various cultural values and psychological factors on the green purchase behaviour of Egyptian consumers. The findings confirmed the influence of environmental concern along with environment orientation and ecological knowledge towards green purchase intention.

**Saeed et al., (2013)** in their study undertaken amongst the students of Sahiwal University, Pakistan reported a significant impact of environmental knowledge and environmental concern on green purchase intention.

**Lasuin and Ng, (2014)** conducted a study to investigate the relationship between environmental concern, social influence, self-image and moderating effect of demographic factors on green purchase intention among university students in Kota Kinabalu. The findings revealed that environmental concern and self-image showed positive significant relationship toward green purchase intention.

**Arisal and Atalar, (2016)** found that there were significant relations among collectivism, environmental concern and ecological purchase intention in their study conducted in Turkey using structural equation modeling.

**Jaiswal and Kant, (2018)** in their empirical study conducted using structural equation modelling found that green purchase intention was significantly influenced by attitude towards green products, environmental concern and perceived consumer effectiveness.

### Objective of the Study

- To study the relationship between environmental concern and green purchase intention.

### Hypothesis

H<sub>0</sub>= There is no relationship between environmental concern and green purchase intention.

### Research Methodology

*Research Area:* The study was conducted among the students residing in the city of Guwahati, Assam.

*Population and Sample Size:* The target population for the study was students of undergraduate and post graduate residing in Kamrup Metro district of Assam. The total sample size for the study comprised of 100 students.

*Sampling Process:* Convenient sampling method was used to collect data from students.

*Research Instrument:* A well structured close ended questionnaire was used to collect data from samples. The questionnaires were distributed and received through the online mode.

*Measures:* The variable “environmental concern” was measured using a four-item scale adopted from Kilbourne and Pickett (2008) and “green purchase intention” with five-item scale from Paul, Modi and Patel (2016). The respondents were asked to provide answers on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

*Data analysis technique:* Pearson correlation matrices and regression analysis were used to analyse the collected data by using SPSS.

### Data Analysis

**Reliability Analysis:** The reliability analysis is used to evaluate the internal consistency of the items used in the construct. The total reliability scale for the constructs “environmental concern” and “green purchase intention” were found to be 0.798 and 0.877 respectively. The numbers indicate reliability factor and considering that the maximum output can be 1.0, so the constructs used in the study can be accepted for analysis. (See table)

**Table 1: Reliability Analysis**

| Constructs               | Cronbach's Alpha | Number of Items |
|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Environmental Concern    | .798             | 4               |
| Green Purchase Intention | .877             | 5               |

**Table 2: Summary Statistics – Mean Responses for Variables**

| Variables                | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------|------|----------------|
| Environmental Concern    | 4.21 | .401           |
| Green Purchase Intention | 4.14 | .525           |

**Table 3: Correlation between Environmental Concern and Green Purchase Intention**

|                                 |                            | Environmental Concern | Green Purchase Intention |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Environmental Concern</b>    | <b>Pearson Correlation</b> | 1                     | .422**                   |
|                                 | <b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>     |                       | .000                     |
|                                 | <b>N</b>                   | 100                   | 100                      |
| <b>Green Purchase Intention</b> | <b>Pearson Correlation</b> | .422**                | 1                        |
|                                 | <b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>     | .000                  |                          |
|                                 | <b>N</b>                   | 100                   | 100                      |

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

The above table shows the correlation matrices of the two variables. Pearson Correlation between environmental concern and green purchase intention was executed for determining the relationship between them. Analysis of correlation matrices table has shown that the correlation between environmental concern and green purchase intention was ( $r = .422$ ), which was significant at .000 levels ( $p < 0.01$ ), thus  $H_0$  is rejected. So, it is found that there exists a positive and significant correlation between environmental concern and green purchase intention. Therefore, it can be concluded that green purchase intention is positively influenced by environmental concern.

## Discussion & Conclusion

The results highlight that green purchase behaviour of a consumer is predicted significantly by his environmental concerns which is in line with previous studies. Instead of trying to lure all consumers towards green products, marketers at the present should segment the market according to their environmental concerns and target those who have concerns for the environment. Marketers can promote messages regarding the declining condition of the environment which in turn would help in raising the environmental concern.

The environment has been deteriorating rapidly in the present times hence it is necessary that consumers start embracing green or sustainable products in lieu of traditional products. In this regard, government and other stakeholders need to play an important role in creating awareness as well as promoting greener themes among the consumers.

The present study undertakes only one factor for determining consumers' green purchase intention in the area of Guwahati. Future studies can be carried out undertaking multiple factors. Moreover, the study was carried out amongst the student population and so may not reflect the overall picture of green purchase intention of the entire city of Guwahati.

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