

Factors Affecting Consumers' Green Product Purchase Decisions: With Special Reference to Green Household Electronic Products in Western Province of Sri Lanka

M.B.B.U. Mandawala¹, Dr. T.C. Gamage²

¹Department of Tourism Management, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Belihuloya, Sri Lanka

²Department of Marketing Management, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Belihuloya, Sri Lanka

Abstract— *The green consumer decisions is recently being discussed in Asian context. The literature on green consumer decisions and purchase decisions recently focuses on the Asian market and as a result it is being spread in the Sri Lankan context. Though environmental consciousness in Sri Lankan consumers is observed in the literature, purchase decision towards green electronic products is not yet clearly understood in Western Province. Energy efficient electronic appliances or green electronic appliances are purchased by a wide variety of customers in today's context. As a trend people are more conscious about environmental threats and willingly take steps to contribute to the environmental protection. Present research measured the impact of factors, supporting environmental protection, drive for environmental responsibility, environmental friendliness of companies, social influence, perceived value, perceived quality identified from literature and their influence onto the green electronic products purchase decisions in Western Province. The research aimed to solve the issue of what are the factors affecting the purchase decisions of green household electronics products in Western Province?*

Research was carried out by using quantitative method and a questionnaire was distributed among consumers who have purchased green electronic appliances and who are willing to purchase green electronic appliances. 450 responses were taken as the sample for the study. Correlation analysis and regression was implemented to understand the impact between the independent factors and consumers' green electronic products purchase decisions. Researcher found that green product purchase decisions are dependent on supporting environmental protection, drive for environmental responsibility, environmental friendliness of companies, and perceived value. According to research findings, these factors significantly impact the green electronic product purchase decisions of consumers in Western Province of Sri Lanka.

Keywords— *Green Consumer Decisions, Green Household Electronic Products.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's context it is clearly observe a higher tendency in using "Green" or "Eco-Friendly" products (Kodituwakku & Kanagasabai, 2011). As a concept the green marketing has emerged in the latter half of the 20th century. The concept was developed through the environmentally friendly attitude of the consumers and business organizations (Paettie & Crane, 2005). Green marketing is also referred to as environmental marketing including producing, pricing and delivering

products which consumer needs and has little or no impact on nature (Grant, 2008).

When considering the global context, the environmental conditions in this era are more harmful to consumer health. According to Rahbar and Wahid, (2011) global warming, air pollution, ozone depletion and over population are the major concerns which has led the focus to the significance in protecting the environment. There has been a change in consumer attitudes towards a green lifestyle. People are insistently trying to reduce their negative impact on the environment (Rizwan, Kumar, & Memon, 2014). Therefore people are willingly take necessary actions to reduce their environmental impact.

Consumers are motivating to reduce environmental harm by changing their consumption patterns in today's context (Samarasinghe, 2012). In today's Sri Lankan context high vulnerable to environmental threats because of the negative impacts on environment due to the day today lifestyles of people. Most of the consumers have identified the environmental damage and the indirect negative impact on man's health and safety. Therefore the consumers in today's era are motivated towards protecting environment by altering their consumption patterns.

Environmentally friendly attitude was emerged in consumers mind set over the past decades (Diekmann & Franzen, 1999). As a result of that the demand for green products in the market has increased worldwide.

According to the findings from the 2015 Cone Communications/Ubiquity Global CSR Study, global consumers feel a personal accountability to address social and environmental issues and look to companies as partners in progress. More over the study concludes that, 81% of consumers will make personal sacrifices to address social and environmental issues.

Green marketing practices and the forces of "Going Green" has now been extended to Asian region where the people and governments are affected by environmental threats (Samarasinghe, 2012). When considering about the Sri Lankan context, businesses in Sri Lanka focus on gaining a greener public view of the company which encourages consumers to buy environmentally friendly products.

These findings evidence the improved environmental consciousness and tendency to lead environmentally friendly

life styles are trending in Sri Lankan context. Therefore there is a need to understand the factors affecting environmentally friendly purchase decisions of Western Province consumers.

There are many researchers conducted worldwide to study the scope of factors affecting the green purchase decisions. Green electronic products are also referred to as the energy efficient electronic devices or appliances. They are harmful toxic free electronic appliances which are minimal damaging or no damaging to the environment in usage or disposal.

According to different surveys it has been revealed that there are different factors influencing the purchase decisions of a green product. But this area is less studied in Sri Lankan context. So the focus of this study is to identify the factors affecting the green purchase decisions towards the consumer household electronics in Western Province.

Therefore the purpose of the study is to examine the factors affecting Green household Electronic product purchase decisions and to test the relationship with factors affecting green household electronic product purchase decisions of Sri Lankan consumers in Western Province.

The literature reveals that there are many research conducted worldwide to study the scope of factors affecting the green purchase decisions. The literature on green consumer decisions has now focuses on the Asian consumers. It is evidenced that improved environmental consciousness is observed in Sri Lankan consumers (Weerasiri & Zhengang, 2012). Sri Lankan Consumers' interests for green products are gradually raising (Pradeep & Mihirani, 2015). Also the business organizations operating in today have to recognize the competitive advantage and business opportunities that can be gained from producing and marketing green products (Wanninayake & Randiwela, 2012).

There has been many research conducted in this area such as green purchase intention, green purchase decisions and green market segmentation etc. However the consumers' purchase decisions towards green consumer electronics is less studied in Sri Lankan context. This makes it very important to conduct the study and identify the influential factors for consumer purchase decisions towards green consumer electronic products in Western Province. Western Province of Sri Lanka consists of 1.5 million populations which give the largest gross national production in Sri Lanka (Central Bank Report, 2016). The consumption pattern and economic life style of the people is highly differ than other Provinces. Many of the sales in electronic products were happen in Western Province of Sri Lanka (Abans Annual Report, 2015:2016).

Hence the broad purpose of this study is to examine the factors affecting the purchase decisions of green household electronic products in Western Province. The research question formed as,

“What are the factors affecting consumers' green electronic products purchase decisions in Western Province?”

Research Questions

In order to fill the gap identified in existing literature problem background and address the statement of problem by identifying what factors affect consumers' green electronic

product purchase decisions in Western Province, following research questions were developed by the researcher.

Therefore, based on the study, the following research questions can be formulated,

1. Does supporting environmental protection impact on the purchase decisions of green household electronic product in Western Province?
2. Does drive for environmental protection impact on the purchase decisions of green household electronic decisions in Western Province?
3. Does environmental friendliness of companies impact on the purchase decisions of green household electronic product in Western Province?
4. Does social influence impact on the purchase decisions of green household electronic product in Western Province?
5. Does perceived quality impact on the purchase decisions of green household electronic product in Western Province?
6. Does perceived value impact on the purchase decisions of green household electronic product in Western Province?

By addressing the above specific questions the information gap will be filled out and the objectives of this research will be fulfilled.

Research Objectives

The broad aim of this study is to examine the factors affecting the purchase decisions of green household products in Western Province of Sri Lanka. In relation to the purpose and the research question of the study, based on the research questions identified, researcher then developed research objectives for each research question.

1. To examine the effect of supporting environmental protection on green electronic product purchase decisions in Western Province of Sri Lanka.
2. To examine the effect of drive for environmental responsibility on green electronic product purchase decisions in Western Province of Sri Lanka.
3. To examine the effect of environmental friendliness of companies on green electronic product purchase decisions in Western Province of Sri Lanka.
4. To examine the effect of social influence on green electronic product purchase decisions in Western Province of Sri Lanka.
5. To examine the effect of perceived quality on green electronic product purchase decisions in Western Province of Sri Lanka.
6. To examine the effect of perceived value on green electronic product purchase decisions in Western Province of Sri Lanka.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Green Consumerism in Global Context

When exploring the consumer decisions theories and models, the literature emphasizes on the environmental aspects of consumption patterns. This is derived from the demand for eco- friendly products and motivates businesses to behave environmentally friendly. As a result of that companies and marketers focus on sustainable practices to survive in the market (Hansen, 2009).

Green Consumerism in Local Context

Consumers are motivating to reduce environmental harm by changing their consumption patterns in today's context (Samarasinghe, 2012). In the same time the concern about the environmentally friendly product usage has been emerging in Sri Lankan life styles.

It was revealed that the green products have substantial awareness among Sri Lankan customers and they are willing to pay something more on green products (Wanninayake & Randiwela, 2012).

Samarasinghe, (2012), stated that, based on the observations and the speeches entailed by different parties recently, the government, authorized organizations and majority of the citizens of Sri Lanka have become conscious to the seriousness of the environmental issues and health problems. Sri Lanka has taken steps to motivate people in order to reduce pollution through new regulations and introducing environmentally safe consumption as less carbon emission and electronicity & energy saving programs. Many Sri Lankan companies are taking leadership role in their respective categories by demonstrating their commitment towards helping save the environment (McKinesy and Company's global, 2012).

Green Product Purchase Decisions

Albayrak, et al. (2013) has stated that the central theme of research on green consumer decisions is the purchase decisions of green consumers. The purchase decisions can be described in the forms of supporting eco – friendly companies, purchasing green products (Albayrak, et al. 2013), adopting sustainable consumption practices (Gadenne, Sharma, Kerr, & Smith, 2011) and the likely to spend more for green products (Essoussi & Linton, 2010)

Rizwan and Memon, (2017) has viewed the green purchase decisions as the willingness of the people to purchase environmentally friendly products. Businesses need to accomplish the consumer's environmental beliefs, for that the business models and manufacturing must be re-organized (Chen, 2010)

General consumer decisions most probably keen on focusing at personal benefits and costs whereas green consumer decisions is unlikely to deliver instant personal benefits or pleasure, but rather a future oriented outcomes (e.g., a cleaner environment) that often benefits society as a whole (McCarty & Shrum, 2001)

Increasing awareness of consumers towards environmental issues will eventually increase the demand for the eco-friendly products. Green purchase decisions are simply defined as the consumers' decisions to purchase a product or service which is less harmful or not harmful for the society and environment (Rizwan, et al. 2017). With the review of the previous researches it can easily be determined that there is a developing trend in people to purchase and to use such products that are less harmful for the environment.

As stated by Ghodeswar and Kumar, (2012) purchase decisions of green consumers are influenced by broadly two factors. One set of factors are considered as intrinsic to the customers such as the obligation towards environmental

responsibility, quest for gaining knowledge, self-interest to protect the nature and willingness to act for resource conservation. And the other set of factors has been considered extrinsic to the customers such as social image of customers and product features such as product quality, safety, performance and situational factors such as promotional campaigns, consumers product knowledge (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2004).

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Site

As we all known that "green" was the mainstream in businesses due to the awareness of environmental issues. Although there are plenty of researches conducted worldwide, only a few researches have related to the topic green purchase decisions of consumer electronics in Western Province. So the purpose of this study is to identify the factors affecting the green purchase decisions of consumers with special reference to consumer electronic appliances in Western Province.

Six main hypotheses were testing to explain the above purpose. The main purpose of this study is to identify the factors affecting consumers' green household electronic product purchase decisions in Western Province of Sri Lanka. This study will provide a clear understanding for the marketers and for the businesses on factors affecting purchase decisions of consumers' green electronic products in Sri Lanka context.

Research Approach

Deductive research involves statistical analysis which provides numerical values to make conclusions and to test specific hypothesis. Sukamolson also suggests that deductive research is suited, when specific hypothesis are tested in a study. Exploratory method and in addition quantitative research approach utilizes a deductive model in testing the relationship between variables and to provide evidence for or against perspective hypothesis (Newman, 2003). If there are lot of literature about the topic from which a theoretical framework can be defined, it is often suitable to use the deductive approach. Also the positivism philosophy is used. Researcher can conclude this study is deductive, because theories exist within the area and conclusion were drawn from theories and limited time available for this study and it involved lower risk. This study also uses statistical data analysis methods such as correlation analysis, regression analysis, and tries to test specific hypothesis to make conclusions by using numeric values. Based on these characteristics it can be concluded, this study employs deductive research approach.

Research Design

The researcher is an explanatory research where deduction method will be used as reasoning approach and expected to conduct the research in method of quantitative way. Cross-sectional research design selected as the research design for the study. Researcher going to conduct the research by using quantitative type of data. Actually Surveys are the most common method of primary data collection.

Population

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2012) population refers to the entire group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate. The target population of the study can be considered as all western wide spread consumers who are engaged in purchasing, using or willing to purchase at least one household electronic product in their home.

Sampling

Sampling Technique

Sampling is process of selecting a sufficient number of elements from the population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2012). Mainly there are two major types of sampling designs as probability sampling and non-probability sampling. In probability sampling each member, event or thing in the population has known chance to be selected to the sample but in non-probability sampling members are selected from the population in same non-random manner. The researcher used convenience sampling method under non-probability sampling technique, because population of electronic product users in Western Province is unknown in the research context. (The sample is selected because they are convenience) to select the sample of customers.

Methods of Data Collection

Sources of Data

The researcher survey method as research strategy and collects both primary & secondary data for this study. Primary data collected through online questionnaire created through Google forms and printed questionnaire distribution among people in the western Province. Further the researcher collected the secondary data from multiple sources such as research article published in the internet, thesis, Department of senses and statistics, Central bank report, relevant text books & internet.

Primary data

In this study researcher used survey method to collect data. Primary data were collected by using a survey based on a questionnaire with close ended questions

The questionnaire was developed based on (Griskevicius & Tybur, 2010). Questionnaire was developed in English medium.

Secondary data

According to Fisher, (2007), secondary data is the data collected from books, articles, journals etc. Secondary data will be useful, as analysis will be performed by relating it with primary data so that research question could be answered.

Secondary data for this research has been adopted from many already published researches, related articles, journals and different books. Chapter 2: Literature Review provides the basis and background for the present research. Further secondary data sources have helped in providing insights in developing hypothesis, constructing the questionnaire and scaling procedures of the study.

Method of Data Analysis

In the quantitative approach, various statistical methods were employed to compare the data collected from the respondents. These methods include (1) descriptive statistics, which involve in collecting, summarizing and presenting data. This analysis gives the information for the data through the frequency distribution, central tendency, and the dispersion. (2) Inferential statistics, which involve in drawing conclusions about a population based only on sample data. It includes testing correlation, regression analysis, testing hypothesis. In this study multiple regression was used. It there is more than one independent variable uses to explain dependent variable we use multiple regression.

Data analysis for the proposed research has been performed with the latest Statics Package for Social Science (SPSS), 21 Version.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

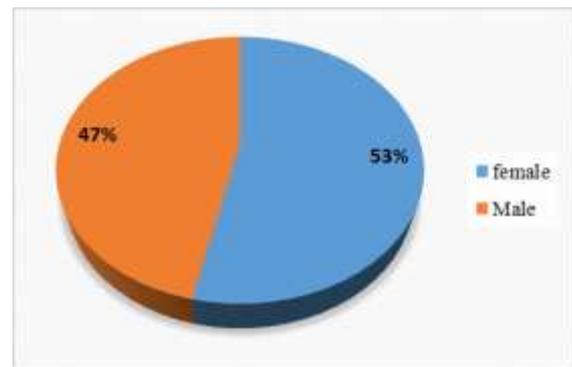


Figure 1. Gender Distribution

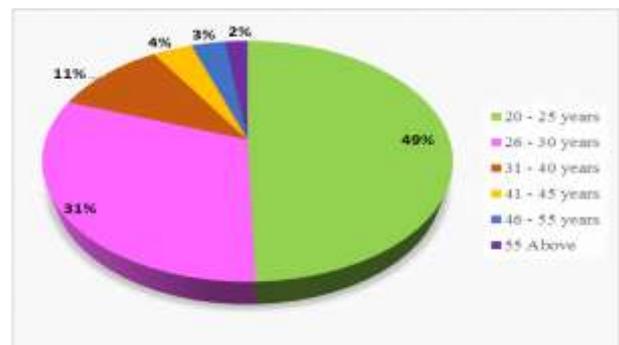


Figure 2. Age Distribution

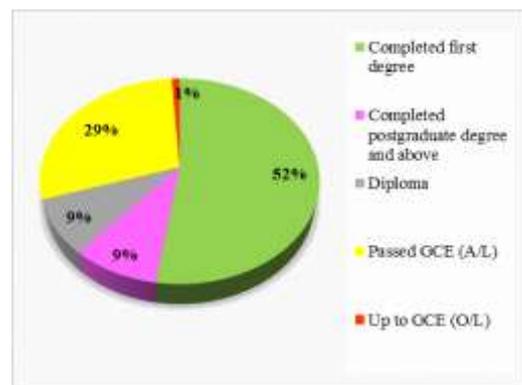


Figure 3. Educational Level Distribution

TABLE 1. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha Value	Comment
Supporting Environmental Protection	0.758	Accepted
Drive for Environmental Responsibility	0.854	Accepted
Environmental Friendliness of Companies	0.765	Accepted
Social Influence	0.835	Accepted
Perceived Quality	0.874	Accepted
Perceived Value	0.814	Accepted
Green Product Purchase Decisions	0.829	Accepted

The corresponding Alpha value of a given set of questions is greater than 0.7 or closer to accepted minimum level 0.7 (Sekaran & Malhotra, 2006) the researcher can conclude that the set of questions used to measure a particular variable is reliable. Cronbach's Alpha value for all these four variables exceeds 0.7. Due to that researcher level that reveals that internal consistency of the measures and it has a high reliability level.

TABLE 2. Correlation Analysis

Variable	Correlation	Sig
Supporting Environmental Protection	0.731	0.000
Drive for Environmental Responsibility	0.679	0.000
Environmental Friendliness of Companies	0.727	0.000
Social Influence	0.530	0.000
Perceived Quality	0.591	0.000
Perceived Value	0.675	0.000

According to above table there is positive Pearson correlation between drive for environment responsibility and green product purchase decisions that indicates R value of 0.679 which shows positive relationship where the P value is lesser than 0.05 represent positive significant relationship.

According to above table there is positive Pearson correlation between environmental friendliness of companies and green product purchase decisions that indicates R value of 0.727 which shows positive relationship where the P value is lesser than 0.05 represent positive significant relationship.

According to above table there is positive Pearson correlation between social influence and green product purchase decisions that indicates R value of 0.530 which shows positive relationship where the P value is lesser than 0.05 represent positive significant relationship.

According to above table there is positive Pearson correlation between perceived quality and green product purchase decisions that indicates R value of 0.591 which shows positive relationship where the P value is lesser than 0.05 represent positive significant relationship.

According to above table there is positive Pearson correlation between perceived quality and green product purchase decisions that indicates R value of 0.727 which shows positive relationship where the P value is lesser than 0.05 represent positive significant relationship.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test shows that the regression model is significance since the significance level is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Thus, the model fit of the regression model can be seen.

Variable	Unstandardized beta coefficient	Sig
Constant	0.172	0.000
Supporting Environmental Protection (SEP)	0.330	0.000
Drive for Environmental Responsibility (DER)	0.121	0.000
Environmental Friendliness of Companies (EFC)	0.294	0.000
Perceived Quality (PQ)		0.000
Perceived Value (PV)	0.187	0.000

Shows the coefficient table of the regression analysis β value of the table represents the degree to which extent the dependent variable can be affected by a certain independent variable while other independent variables remain constant. If the β coefficient is lower than 0.5 there is a significance impact between dependent variable and independent variable.

β coefficient for SEP is 0.330 at 0.000 significance level indicates that increasing 1 unit of SEP causes to increase GPPD in 0.330 units while other independent variables remain constant. Positive β coefficient shows there is a positive impact between SER and GPPD and P value is less than 0.05 which represent statistically significant impact.

β coefficient for EFC is 0.294 at 0.000 significance level indicates that increasing 1 unit of EFC causes to increase GPPD in 0.294 units while other independent variables remain constant. Positive β coefficient shows there is a positive impact between EFC and GPPD and P value is less than 0.05 which represent statistically significant impact.

PV involves 0.187 β value at 0.000 significance level, which denotes, when PV increases 1 unit GPPD increases by 0.187 units. Positive β coefficient shows there is a positive impact between PV and GPPD and P value is less than 0.05 which represent statistically significant impact.

DER involves 0.121 β value at 0.016 significance level, which denotes, when DER increases 1 unit GPPD also increases by 0.121 units. Positive β coefficient shows there is a positive impact between PV and GPPD and P value is less than 0.05 which represent statistically significant impact.

When regression model is run by using step-wise method, SI and PQ two independent variables were rejected by the model, which shows there is no any impact of those variable to GPPD.

Based on the results, regression equation can be written as follows.

$$\text{Green Purchase Decisions} = .172 + .330 \text{ SEP} + .294 \text{ EFC} + .187 \text{ PV} + .121 \text{ DER}$$

V. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that marketing professionals need to relate green electronic products with functional, emotional and experiential needs of Western Province consumers. Also, marketing of green electronic products should offer consumers facts related to environmental performance of the companies, information related to green products.

Thus, they should carefully understand needs of their consumer segments, and accordingly position products green household electronic products to them. Thus, this study enhance understanding of green purchase decisions of Western

Province customers in Sri Lankan context, and offers insights to understand consumer demand for green household electronic products in Sri Lankan market. The findings can be used by the managers of green electronic products who are interested to know the underlying decisions of prospective green purchasers of their green products. Thus, marketers can use them to effectively communicate with consumers so that they can maintain or grow their market shares. As well, foreign companies who intend to launch their green products in Western may use the findings to draw up their marketing strategies.

Since this research was subject to limitations of time, resource availability and with limited scope level of an undergraduate, researcher wish you highlight several areas for future research.

According to the regression analysis of the present research it was found that the predictors of the model explain only 65.9% of the model. This could be due to availability of more other factors influencing the consumers' purchase decisions of green household electronic products. That was not identified in the present research. Therefore future researchers carrying for related industries/ Sri Lankan context should incorporate more variables to develop an adequate model to predict consumers' purchase decisions of green electronic products in Western Province.

Another future research area would be testing this research design in a completely different type of industry in Sri Lanka to identify whether the significance of factors influencing consumers' purchase decisions of green products change according to the industry. Also the same research design can be tested in a different country to identify whether the results change from country to country.

People's psychological decisions patterns will change over time. In this research data acquired by the selectively from the convenient manner of generalization, it would be suggested to use probability sampling technique in the future study for the reason of improving and enhancing the validity and generalization of these research findings.

In addition to that it's better to use 7 point likers scale due to most of the responds are given in the research is neutral and agree when it's come to seven point scale there have many options for respondents.

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