



Vol. 3, No. 3; Jul – Sep (2023)

## Quing: International Journal of Commerce and Management

Available at <https://quingpublications.com/journals/ijcm>



# Do Environmental Issues Impact Consumers' Purchase Intention of Green Products?



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### ARTICLE INFO

**Received:** 15-07-2023

**Received in revised form:**  
11-09-2023

**Accepted:** 15-09-2023

**Available online:**  
30-09-2023

### Keywords:

Consumers' Lifestyle;  
Consumer Behaviour;  
Environmental Advertising;  
Environmental Awareness;  
Environmental Concern;  
Environmental Issues;  
Environment Threats;  
Green Products;  
Purchase Intention.

### ABSTRACT

The constant change in the consumers' lifestyle has become the order of the day, and the preference for green products has gained momentum. The rising environmental threats have made consumers more conscious about preserving the environment from further depletion. It is because of this fact that today, consumers prefer products that are environmentally safe and healthy. However, some consumers are hesitant towards these green products. This may be because of the lack of awareness, concern and proper information about green products or other factors. Thus, this paper intends to determine the impact of Environmental Awareness, Environmental Concern and Environmental Advertising on Consumers' Attitudes and, further, the impact of Consumers' Attitudes on the Purchase Intention of Green Products. The study used a Purposive Sampling Technique to consider a sample of 83 employed women in Chennai. The statistical tools Weighted Mean, Correlation and Regression were used for analysis. Results revealed that Environmental Awareness ( $r=0.521$ ), Environmental Concern ( $r=0.624$ ) and Environmental Advertising ( $r=0.622$ ) were significantly and positively related to Consumers' Attitudes. A significant positive relationship existed between Consumers' Attitudes (0.716) and Purchase Intention. Environmental Concern (0.412) and Environmental Advertising (0.298) were found to have a significant positive impact on Consumers' Attitudes. Further, Consumers' Attitude (0.820) was also found to impact Purchase Intention significantly.

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**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.54368/qijcm.3.3.0004>

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In recent times, constant changes in the lifestyle of consumers have been witnessed worldwide. How consumers satisfy their demands have become a significant concern for organizations. Today, every individual is aware of the environmental threats and the effect of such threats on the health of individuals and the world at large. Because of this, consumers are paying more attention to the influence of their buying patterns on the environment. Consumers are becoming more health and environment cautious and hence prefer green products as it is less harmful to their health and the environment. However, the usage pattern of these green products is still limited among consumers. Awareness about the environmental threats, individual's concern towards the environment and information about the green products or services may play a vital role in influencing consumers' attitudes towards green products.

Environmental awareness encompasses knowledge about various environmental issues and concerns, exerting a substantial influence on individuals' choices when it comes to purchasing eco-friendly products that pose minimal harm to the environment (Hu *et al.*, 2010; Lin *et al.*, 2017; Wang *et al.*, 2018; Li *et al.*, 2020). This awareness prompts consumers to make informed decisions that align with their values and support sustainable practices. Consumers with greater awareness will be more cautious that it is their responsibility to purchase environmentally friendly products. The term environmental concern, an affective attribute, refers to an individual's concern affinity, appreciation and care about the environment (Chan and Yeung, 2005; Rajendran and Arun, 2020). Consumers concerned about the environment might be willing to purchase green products. Advertising is one of the essential marketing techniques that can influence consumers' buying behaviour. Environmental or Green Advertising provides information about green products or services and makes consumers more aware of their benefits on an individual's health and the environment. Consumers today are more conscious about the cost factor and settle for products that are easy on the pocket or something that already enjoys a current market reputation in terms of brand or peer pressure. Little do they realize the benefits or ill effects that they have on one's health and the environment. This may be because of inadequate awareness, information and concern about the habitat, which underlies their attitude and purchase intention towards green products. However, when consumers are provided with complete information about the products or services, it may influence their intention to purchase.

### 1.1 Literature Review

The degradation of our environment has underscored the importance of fostering consumer consciousness regarding eco-friendly products, driven by the imperative to preserve our planet (Singh *et al.*, 2014). Presently, consumers exhibit a clear preference for environmentally sustainable products. However, lack of awareness concerning green marketing issues often influences their purchasing decisions. Furthermore, the knowledge of eco-friendly labels plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer behaviour and contributes to an enhanced understanding of green production (Jain and Gupta, 2019). This increased awareness can lead to more informed and eco-conscious choices in the marketplace, ultimately benefiting consumers and the environment.

An individual's fear, doubts, likes/dislikes and sympathy towards the environment and its quality is an environmental concern (Yeung, 2004; Dagher and Itani, 2012). Environmental advertising plays a pivotal role in simplifying the comprehension and awareness of the attributes and qualities of green products, thereby facilitating the purchase of eco-friendly items (Suki, 2016; Tan *et al.*, 2022). It is essential to recognize that environmental awareness, concern, and exposure to

environmental advertising can collectively influence an individual's attitude toward procuring green products. This is particularly noteworthy as attitude predicts an individual's inclination to buy environmentally friendly products and is positively correlated with subsequent environmentally conscious behaviours (Tan *et al.*, 2022).

Research conducted by Khaleeli and Jawabri (2021) revealed that Environmental Awareness was found to have a positive significant influence on Consumers' Attitudes towards environmentally friendly products. Environmental concern was found to positively and significantly influence environmental attitudes (Rajendran and Arun, 2020). Green advertising positively and significantly affects environmental attitudes (Kusuma and Handayani, 2018). Further, attitude was found to positively and significantly influence green purchase intention (Kusuma and Handayani, 2018).

## 1.2 Need for the study

Environmental issues make consumers more sensitive (Kusuma and Handayani, 2018). Due to the rapid increase in natural disasters throughout the globe, consumers are becoming more cautious about their activities. These alarming situations have enabled them to act proactively, and consumers today are trying to implement environmentally friendly practices. This has resulted in changes in the consumers' buying patterns. The preference for healthier, eco-friendly products that cause less environmental damage is increasing daily. Consumers have started to switch to biodegradable products, which are healthier and energy-efficient. Since society is becoming more concerned about the environment, businesses are attempting to address society's new issues by reforming their business process (Thauseef *et al.*, 2015). The immense benefits of green products on the environment and individuals' health have made consumers willing to pay more for these products than the alternatives. However, some consumers are hesitant to use green products, and there can be many reasons, including environmental issues that can influence consumer's attitudes to green products. Thus, the study attempts to determine the impact of environmental issues, namely environmental awareness, environmental concern and environmental advertising, on consumers' attitudes and further the impact of consumers' attitudes on purchase intention of green products amongst employed women in Chennai. Chennai, the Capital of Tamil Nadu, was chosen as the study area since it is home to people from varied cultures and backgrounds. It is also a hub for developing new products or services; green products are no exception. Employed women comprise the study sample because they have more exposure to any product or service including green products as peers tend to discuss them at the workplace, which they share with the family and society at large. Generally, the women play a pivotal role in deciding the purchases of all products in a family.

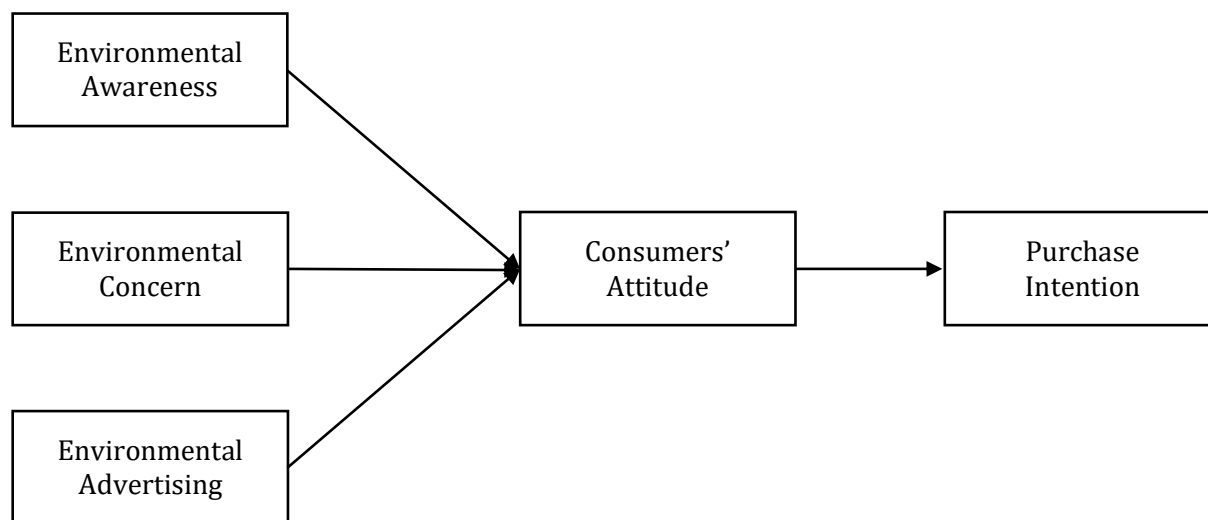
## 1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To examine environmental awareness, environmental concern, environmental advertising, consumers' attitudes and purchase intention.
2. To determine the relationship between environmental awareness, concern, advertising and consumers' attitudes.
3. To determine the relationship between the consumers' attitude and purchase intention.
4. To determine the impact of environmental awareness, concern, and advertising on consumers' attitudes.
5. To determine the impact of consumers' attitudes on purchase intention.

## 1.4 Conceptual Model

Figure 1

Environmental Issues – Purchase Intention Model



Source: [Khaleeli and Jawabri \(2021\)](#); [Rajendran and Arun \(2020\)](#) and [Kusuma and Handayani \(2018\)](#)

The above model is based on the studies of [Khaleeli and Jawabri \(2021\)](#) –“The effect of environmental awareness on consumers’ attitudes and consumers’ intention to purchase environmentally friendly products: Evidence from the United Arab Emirates”; [Rajendran and Arun \(2020\)](#) - “Factors Influencing Indian Millennials’ Green Purchase Intention” by taking into consideration Environmental Concern, Perceived Environmental Knowledge, Environmental Attitude and Green Purchase Intention; [Kusuma and Handayani \(2018\)](#) - “The Effect of Environmental Knowledge, Green Advertising and Environmental Attitude”.

Thus a new model as shown in Figure 1 with factors including environmental awareness, environmental concern, environmental advertising, consumers’ attitudes and purchase intention developed for the current study.

## 2.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology employed in this study is characterized by its empirical and analytical nature. A structured questionnaire was administered to a purposive sample of 83 employed women residing in Chennai to gather primary data. Simultaneously, secondary data was acquired from electronic resources and research articles. The study focused on several key factors: environmental awareness, environmental concern, environmental advertising, consumer attitude, and purchase intention. Respondents' responses to these factors were assessed on a Five-Point Likert Scale, ranging from "Strongly Agree (5)" to "Strongly Disagree (1)". Several statistical tools were employed to analyse the data, including Weighted Mean, Karl Pearson Correlation, and Regression, facilitated by SPSS Version 21 Software.

Before data analysis, the questionnaire's reliability was rigorously tested to ensure its internal consistency and practicality. The Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test was utilized to assess reliability, yielding an overall reliability score of 0.932. As per the criteria established by [Hinton et al., \(2004\)](#) and [Taherdoost \(2016\)](#), a reliability score exceeding 0.90 indicates excellent questionnaire reliability.

### 3.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The following Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents.

Table 1

#### *Demographic Profile of the Respondents*

Demographic Variables	Frequency (N = 83)	Percentage
<b>Age (Completed Years)</b>		
Less than 30 years	40	48.2
30 - 40 years	14	16.9
41- 50 years	14	16.9
Above 51 years	15	18.1
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
Undergraduates	16	19.3
Postgraduates	47	56.6
Others	20	24.1
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	54	65.1
Unmarried	29	34.9
<b>Monthly Income</b>		
Less than ₹30,000	23	27.7
₹30,000 – upto ₹60,000	29	34.9
₹60,000- upto ₹90,000	15	18.1
₹90,000 & above	16	19.3
<b>Type of Family</b>		
Nuclear Family	56	67.50
Joint Family	27	32.50
<b>Size of Family</b>		
Less than 3	10	12.05
3 – 5	61	73.49
Above 5	12	14.46

Source: Primary Data

The data relating to the demographic profile of the respondents, as depicted in the above Table 1, explains the following.

Concerning age, it can be inferred that the majority (48.2%) of the respondents are less than 30 years, 18.1% are above 51 years, and 16.9% belong to the age category 30 - 40 years and 41 - 50 years. With respect to Educational Qualification, it can be inferred that the majority (56.6%) of the respondents are Postgraduates, 24.1% of the respondents belong to the category Others (*e.g.*, MBA, M.Phil., Ph.D.) and 19.3 % of the respondents are Undergraduates. With respect to Marital Status, it can be inferred that the majority (65.1%) of the respondents are Married, and 34.9% are Unmarried. With respect to Monthly Income, it can be inferred that the majority (34.9%) of the respondents have a monthly income between ₹30,000 – upto ₹60,000, 27.7% of the respondents earn monthly less than ₹30,000, 19.3% earn monthly ₹90,000 & above and 18.1% have a monthly income between ₹60,000 – upto ₹90,000. With respect to the Type of Family, it can be inferred that the majority (67.5%) of the respondents live in a nuclear family, while 32.5% live in a joint family. Further, with respect to the Size of Family, it can be inferred that the majority (73.49%) of the respondents have a family size of 3 – 5 members, 14.46% have a family size of more than 5 members and 12.05% have a family size of less than 3 members.

The first part of the analysis depicts the weighted mean scores of Environmental Awareness, Environmental Concern, Environmental Advertising, Consumers' Attitude and Purchase Intention.

Table 2

*Environmental Awareness, Environmental Concern, Environmental Advertising, Consumers' Attitude and Purchase Intention*

Factors	Weighted Mean Scores
Environmental Awareness	4.41
Environmental Concern	4.25
Environmental Advertising	4.00
Consumers' Attitude	4.34
Purchase Intention	4.09

Source: Primary Data

The information presented in Table 2 suggests that the weighted mean scores for all the factors under investigation are consistently above 4. This implies that respondents have agreed with the statements related to these factors. Expressly, it signifies that the respondents exhibit awareness of environmental issues, possess concerns about environmental safety, and place trust in companies that promote green products. Consequently, this inclination enables them to prefer using eco-friendly products.

The subsequent phase of the analysis delves into establishing the relationships between the various factors of interest by applying the Karl Pearson Correlation.

### 3.1 Relationship Among the Factors of the Study

The relationship among the factors of the study is determined by testing the following Hypotheses:

- **H<sub>1</sub>**: There is a significant correlation between Environmental Awareness and Consumers' Attitudes.
- **H<sub>2</sub>**: There is a significant correlation between Environmental Concern and Consumers' Attitudes.
- **H<sub>3</sub>**: There is a significant correlation between Environmental Advertising and Consumers' Attitudes.
- **H<sub>4</sub>**: There is a significant correlation between Consumers' Attitude and Purchase Intention.

Table 3

*Relationship among the Factors of the Study*

Factors	"r values"	sig
Environmental Awareness and Consumers' Attitude	0.521**	0.000
Environmental Concerns and Consumers' Attitudes	0.624**	0.000
Environmental Advertising and Consumers' Attitude	0.622**	0.000
Consumers' Attitude and Purchase Intention	0.716**	0.000

Source: Primary Data

Note: \*\* denotes significant at 1% level.

From the above Table 3, it can be inferred that, since  $p < 0.01$ , Environmental Awareness ( $r=0.521$ ), Environmental Concern ( $r =0.624$ ), and Environmental Advertising ( $r=0.622$ ) depicted a

significant positive relationship with Consumers' Attitude at 1 % level of significance. Thus, the hypotheses ( $H_1, H_2, H_3$ ) are accepted, indicating a significant positive relationship between the factors mentioned above. This may be because awareness about the benefits of green products, concern towards protecting the environment and becoming socially responsible persuades an individual to use green products.

Additionally, the statistical analysis reveals a significant positive relationship between Consumers' Attitude ( $r=0.716$ ) and Purchase Intention at the 1% significance level, with  $p < 0.001$ . Consequently, the hypothesis ( $H_4$ ) is accepted. This outcome implies that an individual's favourable attitude towards green products significantly drives their intention to purchase these environmentally friendly products.

The subsequent phase of our analysis involves investigating the impact of the various factors under study using Regression analysis.

### 3.2 Impact of Environmental Awareness, Environmental Concern and Environmental Advertising on Consumers' Attitude

The impact of Environmental Awareness, Environmental Concern and Environmental Advertising on Consumers' Attitudes is determined by testing the following Hypotheses:

- **H<sub>5</sub>**: Environmental Awareness significantly influences Consumers' Attitudes.
- **H<sub>6</sub>**: Environmental Concern significantly influences Consumers' Attitudes.
- **H<sub>7</sub>**: Environmental Advertising significantly influences Consumers' Attitudes.

Table 4

*Impact of Environmental Awareness, Environmental Concern and Environmental Advertising on Consumers' Attitude*

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	0.438	0.511		0.857	0.394		
Environmental Awareness	0.218	0.135	0.157	1.607	0.112	0.645	1.551
Environmental Concern	0.412	0.121	0.343	3.396	0.001**	0.599	1.670
Environmental Advertising	0.298	0.082	0.354	3.610	0.001**	0.638	1.568
R	0.718						
R <sup>2</sup>	0.516						
F Value	28.095						
P Value	0.000**						

Source: Primary Data

Note: \*\* denotes significant at 1%

Dependent Variable: Consumers' Attitude

From Table 4, it can be inferred that 51.6% ( $R^2 = 0.516$ ) variance in Consumers' Attitudes is explained by Environmental Awareness, Environmental Concern and Environmental Advertising.

The Regression Equation is Y,

$$\text{Consumers' Attitude} = 0.438(\text{Constant}) + 0.218 X_1 + 0.412X_2 + 0.298X_3$$

Where,

$X_1$  = Environmental Awareness,

$X_2$  = Environmental Concern,

$X_3$  = Environmental Advertising

It can also be inferred that  $p < 0.01$  for Environmental Concern and Environmental Advertising at a 1 % level of significance. Hence, the hypotheses ( $H_6$  and  $H_7$ ) are accepted, indicating a significant positive impact of Environmental Concern and Environmental Advertising on Consumers' Attitudes. This means that though individuals are not aware of the environmental degradation and the advantages of green products, their concern towards the environment and green advertising can inculcate responsibility towards their society, thereby influencing them to consume green products.

The results are consistent with the study by Rajendran and Arun (2020), where Environmental Concern was found to positively and significantly influence Environmental Attitude. The results are also consistent with the study conducted by Kusuma and Handayani (2018), in which Green Advertising was found to positively and significantly affect Environmental Attitudes.

Amongst these factors, Environmental Concern (0.412) was found to have the highest impact on Consumers' Attitudes, followed by Environmental Advertising (0.298) and Environmental Awareness (0.218).

Moreover, it's worth noting that the collinearity statistics provide valuable insights. With Variation Inflation Factors (VIF) below 10 and tolerance values exceeding 0.1, it becomes evident that the data satisfies the collinearity assumption. This signifies that multicollinearity, a potential concern in regression analysis, is not a significant issue in this dataset.

### 3.3 Impact of Consumers' Attitude on Purchase Intention

The impact of Consumers' Attitudes on Purchase Intention is determined by testing the following Hypotheses:

- **H<sub>8</sub>**: Consumer's attitude significantly influences Purchase Intention.

Table 5

*Impact of Consumers' Attitude on Purchase Intention*

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	0.526	0.389		1.353	0.180		
Consumers' Attitude	0.820	0.089	0.716	9.238	0.000**	1.000	1.000
R	0.716						
R <sup>2</sup>	0.513						
F Value	85.334						
P Value	0.000**						

Source: Primary Data

Note: \*\*denotes significant at 1%

Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

It can be inferred from the above Table 5 that 51.3% ( $R^2 = 0.513$ ) variance in Purchase Intention is explained by Consumers' Attitude.

The Regression Equation is Y,

$$\text{Purchase Intention} = 0.526 (\text{Constant}) + 0.820 X_1$$

Where,

$$X_1 = \text{Consumers' Attitude}$$



Furthermore, it is evident that  $p < 0.001$  for Consumers' Attitudes at the 1% significance level. Consequently, hypothesis  $H_8$  is accepted. This suggests a substantial and positive influence of Consumers' Attitudes on Purchase Intention. This connection may be attributed to the fact that when individuals grasp the advantages of green products in terms of their personal health and the environment, they become more inclined to adjust their lifestyle choices, heightening their intention to purchase green products.

The result is consistent with the study by [Kusuma and Handayani \(2018\)](#), where attitude positively and significantly influences green purchase intention.

Moreover, it's noteworthy that the collinearity statistics provide valuable insights. With Variation Inflation Factors (VIF) below 10 and tolerance values exceeding 0.1, it becomes evident that the data fulfils the collinearity assumption. This signifies that multicollinearity, a potential concern in regression analysis, is not a significant issue in this dataset.

#### **4.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

In this era of immense competition, one of the significant challenges for businesses is to assess the latest trends and changes in the market constantly. These trends and changes can be determined by researching the changes in the behaviour of consumers. Identifying these changes will enable businesses to modify and improve how they can offer their customers. Today, consumers are concerned about environmental degradation and the negative impact of consumers' lifestyles on the environment. Because of this, consuming products that cause less harm to the environment and the health of humanity has gained attention in recent times. These products are known as green products. Though consumers are becoming more conscious, the consumption of green products is limited, and this may be because of several factors that can affect consumers' attitudes toward green products. The results of the study revealed that environmental concerns and environmental advertisements were found to impact consumers' attitudes. This means that an individual's concern towards the environment and information about the environmental threats and green products will enable the consumers to change their attitude towards protecting the environment.

Therefore, it becomes imperative for businesses to implement green advertisement as one of their business strategies. It will provide information about green products and enable the consumers to understand that businesses are also concerned about the environment and individuals. This will help businesses to gain a competitive edge over their competitors and survive in an ever-challenging business environment. Further, it also becomes essential for the Government to implement several awareness programs and enforce necessary Laws as it will enable the consumers to become more socially responsible towards protecting the environment and thus will prefer to use at least one of the green products in their future.

#### **4.1 Limitations of the Study**

1. The sample for the study comprised Employed Women.
2. The study is subject to the limitations of the questionnaire method.

#### **4.2 Scope for further study**

1. Personality traits of individuals, brand image, trust, satisfaction, post-purchase behaviour, and other factors influencing consumers' attitudes toward green products can be considered in future research. Such factors can shape an individual's perception of a product or service.

2. A comparative study between male and female respondents will enable the marketers to implement better strategies and position their products and services in the market.
3. A longitudinal study can focus on a particular type of green product. This will give marketers an idea about how the tastes and preferences of consumers change. This is because it is undeniable that consumers' needs, wants, tastes, and preferences are never-ending, and their satisfaction is the ultimate aim of any marketer.

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