Abstract- The changes in the global climatic conditions have led and will lead to adaptive consumption behaviour and life styles in the form of aggressive conservation, recycling, energy saving, and green product. The impact of consumers’ environmental knowledge, attitudes, behaviour, and its resultant popular political actions have opened doors to pro-environmental thinking and consumption. Therefore, marketing can earn for the pro-environmental initiatives taken by the companies in terms of sustainable process and green product offerings as well as play a vital role in establishing greener patterns of consumption into contemporary life styles.

Keywords- consumer behaviour, Green attributes, Green purchase decision

INTRODUCTION

In order to promote greener patterns of consumption into contemporary lifestyles, companies need to segment their markets on the basis of pro-environmental purchase behaviour and then position their products as per the green attributes endorsements specific to those consumer segments [2, 9]. However, socio-demographic [11] and personality indicators have only limited success in profiling consumers according to their pro-environmental purchasing behaviour [1,3,5,6]. Therefore, the objective of this article to ascertain the pro-environmental attributes of products such as characteristics like energy conservation, Organically grown, Recyclable, Ozone-friendly, and others that are endorsed by the consumers’ and considered for green purchasing decisions.

The consumers’ attitude and behaviour towards green purchasing decisions can be linked to five categories green product attributes. The rationale behind the adopted approach for this study rests on the fact that consumers have traditionally shown to express their environmental consciousness through the products they purchase. In recent years when the environmental importance has increased, consumers rather than cutting down their
consumption of products have began to seek out environmental friendly alternatives for their usual product purchases. Thus, it is envisaged in this study that measures of environmental consciousness in the form of consumers’ attribute endorsement will be more closely related to their purchasing habits.

During the last two decades, consumers are exhibiting high levels of environmental consciousness and pro-environmental behaviour. Specific knowledge, attitudes and behaviour towards the environmental, social and economically viable products is being linked to sustainable lifestyles. According to a study by MORI (Market & Opinion Research International) consumers select products on the basis of “environmental performance” and their numbers have significantly increased from 19% to 42% in less than a year [4]. In another study by A. C. Nelson & Co., it was found that four out of five consumers express their opinion about the environment through their purchasing behaviour [10]. This dramatic increase in environmental consciousness worldwide has shifted the focus of companies to position their products through green offerings. However, this picture may vary within the country context. There are certain country specific factors such as level of pollution, legislation, use of green products imbibed in the culture and traditions affect the environmental-consciousness construct. Through literature survey it was found that socio-demographics and consumer personality indicators have not been successfully examined in context of environmental purchasing behaviour [3]. In addition to these substantive issues and theoretical examination, many of these measurements have not been subjected to psychometric assessment.

This study proposes to use a segment wise approach to examine the consumer's green attribute endorsement for products they consume. This linkage between pro-environmental purchase behaviour and environmental consciousness is measured on the five summated rating scale to know how the consumers’ knowledge about environmental friendly objects, its use, and abuse affect the purchasing behaviour. This approach rests on the facts that consumers express their environmental consciousness through the products they purchase. This is clearly evident from the seriousness shown by the international society towards environmental protection through local and international litigation, community pressure, and dialogue process.

**Methodology**

In order to establish a link between green product offerings and the consumers’ green purchase decision, it is necessary to segment the consumers on the basis of their green attribute endorsement. Although it is not so that green purchasing behaviour would only be reflected in a certain socio-demographic section of the consumer base. It is quite possible that other variables like personality may impact the segmentation process. The survey instrument in case of this study was administered through a self-completion questionnaire on a sample of 90 post graduate MBA students at an institution in India. The sample composition is largely homogeneous representing similar level of education, class status, economic background, age and others. The sample also contains more number of males. But this should have negligible impact on the overall decision making as in this group both male and female represent the type of household were both male and female play major role in the household decision making.

The variables applied in this study mainly relate to the individual’s endorsement of product attributes before they decide to purchase the product. In do this; respondents were made to select various green product attributes (Table 1) like energy conservation, ozone friendly, organically grown and others which they would consider as endorsements of pro-environmental products under different choice conditions. A summated scale measure of responses of sample
population was collected on three endorsements statement namely:

1. Choose the factor as environmental friendly alternative even if there are products of a similar price.
2. Choose the factor as environmentally alternative even if price is different
3. Choose the factor as environmentally alternative even if price is too high

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Factors</td>
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<td>Recyclable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not used on animals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Energy Conservation</td>
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<td>Organically grown</td>
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<td>Ozone-Friendly</td>
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Measurement

Each item on the questionnaire was measured on a five point scale (1= never and 5= always). Using principal component analysis, the unidimensionality of the construct was established and the item exhibiting less than 75 per cent of variation was discarded. The internal consistency was well accepted above at 0.70 as threshold [7]. In order to identify the above five green attributes, an extensive literature review was undertaken to explore both the green issues as well as the instruments used for its measurements. We further moved on to focus group discussions with several actors in different capacities mainly with the aim of generating the items of the questionnaire. The scales were further pre-tested for their dimensionality, reliability, and construct validity.

Findings

To measure the strength of relationship between consumers’ pro-environmental attitude and behaviour with the consumers’ attribute endorsement, regression analysis was conducted for the sample. All regression equations were found to be significant beyond 0.5 % level, reflecting the explanatory power and importance of environmental consciousness. The partial regression for all the items were in positive direction indicating that the higher environmental consciousness leads to higher attribute endorsements. The explanatory power of four endorsement attribute namely recyclable, not use on animal and ozone friendly were highest.

The study illustrates that the consumers’ environmental attribute endorsement may impact their purchasing decision, although it is likely that they may be influenced by other moderated factors. However, the findings suggest that environmental attribute endorsements are consistent predictor of purchasing behaviour. Thus, organizations aiming to position their products through green product offerings are recommended to develop their products directed at increasing concern about these environmental attribute endorsements. However, in order to increase market penetration investigations are necessary to ascertain how environmental attitudes are formed. In this context a comparison of various sources of consumer information must form the basis of investigation to examine consumer’s attitude towards specific products and their beliefs of green claims across the product category.

REFERENCES


