

Status of Private University Students Regarding Green Consumption: A Study on Some Selected Private Universities in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Developing more environmentally sustainable consumption and production system depend upon consumers' willingness to engage in 'greener' consumption behaviour. Research efforts have sought to identify, analyse, and understand the 'green consumer and their behaviour. Initial marketing and economics research, focusing on purchasing activities, has been complemented by research from two private universities fields such as providing a more holistic picture of green consumption as a process. Much of the research has focused on areas with the greatest environmental impacts, namely peoples' homes and household management, behaviour, and their transport behaviour for work, leisure, and travel. The emerging picture of green consumption is of a process that is strongly influenced by consumer values, norms, and habits, yet is highly complex, diverse and context dependent. There are opportunities for future research that provides greater interdisciplinary assumptions and expectations about consumption and the nature of the consumer society.

Key Words: *Private University Students, Green Consumption Behavior, Green products*

1. Introduction

Every time individuals and groups make decisions about whether (or not) to purchase a product or service there is the potential for that decision to contribute to a more or less sustainable pattern of consumption. Each purchase has ethical, resource, waste and

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community impact implications. When individuals accept to adopt the sustainable lifestyles, they engage with an increasingly complex decision-making process. These every day decisions on practical environmental or ethical solutions often result in trade-offs between conflicting issues and result in a 'motivational and practical complexity of green consumption' (Moisander, 2007).

This paper is generally exploratory in nature which has two objectives (Chen & Chai, 2010). The first objective is to compare the demographic of gender with attitudes towards the environment and green products. The second objective is to investigate the status of the students regarding use of green products or to consume green. The methodology and the results from the quantitative study will be presented. The paper concludes with a discussion of findings related to green consumptions.

2. Objectives of Study

The main aim of this paper is to investigate the status of private university students regarding green products. It will also look into the matter of purchase decision process of green consumers. To present report requires, investigating how green consumers decide which technology of products to purchase and what factors influenced this purchase decision process. The question is "Why is this of interest?" and the answer refers that the interest lies with how consumers that is most likely to react to this information, namely green consumers, and put the information into action when purchasing products.

3. Methodology of the Study

This is a descriptive research. Data have been collected from primary sources. Size of sample is 100 individuals when all of them are private university students. Convenience sampling technique has been followed to collect data. Face to face interviews has been conducted with self-declared green consumers from two private universities.

4. Literature Review

Comprehensive review of the literature on consumer behaviour and behavioural change is required to get well acquainted with green behaviour. Different techniques have been used to identify the status of students regarding green consumption. There has also produced a useful categorisation and review of consumer behaviour theories that relate to the critical internal and external factors influencing consumer choice in respect of energy use. The categories are: 1. Consumer choice; 2. Needs, values and attitudes; 3. Learning; 4. Social learning; 5. Buying process; 6. Categorisation of consumers; and, 7. Product attributes and categorisation (Young, Hwang, McDonald, & Oates, 2010).

4.1 What is Green Consumption?

Green, a symbol of life, good health, and vigor, is also a color that reminds us of hope. All around the globe, the word is associated with energy conservation and environmental protection (Lin & Huang, 2012). The term “green consumption” covers a full range of activities in both production and consumption fields, including green products, the recycling of materials, the efficient use of energy, the protection of the environment, and the preservation of species (Alfredsson, 2004). The origin of green consumption was aroused by the understanding of crisis of the deterioration of resources and the environment. Therefore, the enterprise or manufacturer has to provide a greener product and service in order to comply with the changing of consumer purchasing behaviour (Pickett-Baker & Ozaki, 2008; Solomon, 2014).

Unfortunately, a majority of people believe that green consumption refers solely to the promotion or advertising of products with environmental characteristics. Terms like Phosphate Free, Recyclable, Refillable, Ozone Friendly, and Environmentally Friendly are some of the things consumers most often associate with green consumption. While these terms are green consumption claims, in general green consumes a much broader concept, one that can be applied to consumer goods, industrial goods and even services. For example, around the world there are resorts that are beginning to promote themselves as "Eco tourist" facilities, i.e., facilities that "specialize" in experiencing nature or operating in a fashion that minimizes their environmental impact (Singh & Khan, 2014).

Thus, green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. Yet defining green marketing is not a simple task. Indeed, the terminology used in this area has varied, it includes: Green Marketing, Environmental Marketing and Ecological Marketing. While green marketing came into prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it was first discussed much earlier. The American Marketing Association (AMA) held the first workshop on "Ecological Marketing" in 1975. The proceedings of this workshop resulted in one of the first books on green marketing entitled "Ecological Marketing" (Henion & Kinnear, 1976). Since that time a number of other books on the topic have been published (Polonsky, 1995). The AMA workshop attempted to bring together academics, practitioners, and public policy makers to examine marketing's impact on the natural environment. At this workshop, ecological marketing was defined as: the study of the positive and negative aspects of marketing activities on pollution, energy depletion and no energy resource depletion (Polonsky, 1995; Polonsky & Rosenberger, 2001). This early definition has three key components: a) It is a subset of the overall marketing activity; b) It examines both the positive and negative activities; and c) A narrow range of environmental issues are examined.

While this definition is a useful starting point, to be comprehensive green marketing needs to be more broadly defined. Before providing an alternative definition, it should be noted that no one definition or terminology has been universally accepted. This lack of consistency is a large part of the problem, for how can an issue be evaluated if all researchers have a different perception of what they are researching. The following definition is much broader than those of other researchers and it encompasses all major components of other definitions.

Green or Environmental Marketing consists of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment of every sector (Wasik, 1996). Therefore it ensures that the interests of the organization and all its consumers are protected, as voluntary exchange will not take place unless both the buyer and seller mutually benefit. Green consumption is the practice of using environmentally friendly products that do not cause risk for human health and do not threaten the function of diversity to natural ecosystems (Connolly & Prothero, 2008). Consumers have significant influence and direct impact on supply and demand in the market place. Green consumerism comes from the desire to protect resources for future generations and to increase our quality of life (Jay Polonsky, 2008).

4.2 Importance of Green Consumption

Importance of green consumption is depicted in the following literature (Gilg, Barr, & Ford, 2005; Peattie, 2010):

- i. The concept of cleaner production has gained importance of a core pollution management strategy.
- ii. Industry's primary responsibility is to maintain environmental quality to control pollutants and wastes.
- iii. Consumption of products, energy and natural resource is growing steady around the world, driven by economic development and population growth.
- iv. Issue of green consumption must get beyond academic and research institutes. It should come into communities and market places.
- v. Developing greener consumption will require co-operation from consumers, communities and civil society.
- vi. Cleaner production strategies rely on product life cycle that captures: Impact from production process, effects of distribution, consumption recycling, etc.

- vii. Barriers to Greener Consumption can be overcome with the support of Gov't.
- viii. One of the themes for sustainable development is to change today's consumption patterns in order to preserve future opportunities for development.

4.3 Examples of Green Products

Choosing to lead a sustainable lifestyle can be rewarding and beneficial to future generations, though it is not without its fair share of challenges. With savvy marketers and the need for every product to have a competitive advantage, labeling may not always indicate that a product is truly green (Mazar & Zhong, 2010).

There are some selected attributes that we can describe green products and services; we list them below to help you further understand what a green product is.

- Energy efficient, durable and often have low maintenance requirements.
- Free of Ozone depleting chemicals, toxic compounds and don't produce toxic by-products.
- Often made of recycled materials or content or from renewable and sustainable sources.
- Obtained from local manufacturers or resources.
- Biodegradable or easily reused either in part or as a whole.

Few examples of green product are given below:

Energy Saving bulb – In Bangladesh, energy saving bulb are available in everywhere. Its save our electricity as well as we can save our money

Food- Locally produced foods, such as vegetables and fruits can be buy from a farmer's market or grow at own supervision. Organic foods are best example.

Appliances and Electronics- LED bulbs can save significant amount of energy and carbon emissions over incandescent and fluorescent lamps. LED bulbs are available in various sizes in markets.

Bicycle: one of the best examples of green product is the bicycle, because of its zero impact on environment pollution. The human effort and energy is the only energy used.

Solar Candles: to save the electricity, most of the modern countries are using solar candles now days. Versatile and decorative these solar-powered, candle lantern designed lights are great for any ambient accent lighting. The photocell sensor automatically turns light on at dusk and off at daybreak.

Solar Phone Charger: to minimize the rush and being desperate for a plugging the charger for the mobile phone, a great invention is the solar phone charger, while saving energy. Just putting the charger in the sun, and will be automatically set and recharged.

Recycled Fabric Clothes: Buy clothes that are made from organic or recycled fabrics. This is usually signaled by a logo, a seal, or it is mentioned on the tag.

House Cleaners: Products found in supermarkets to clean the house are full of environmentally harmful chemical components. They can be easily replaced by white vinegar, baking soda, tea tree oil and water. The home remedies will ensure the same cleanliness, with a much better output for the environment.

5. Finding and discussions

5.1 Factors that affect green consumer behaviour

There are some factors that have been shown to exert influence on the logical behaviour of individuals have been generally classified as external is education, media, family, or culture and the internal of knowledge, attitudes, awareness, or involvement, and the other situational (economic rewards and legislation). Many other researches have focused on demographic and psychographic criteria to explain green consumer behaviour.

Respondents' demographics are as follows:

Table 1 Respondents' Demographics

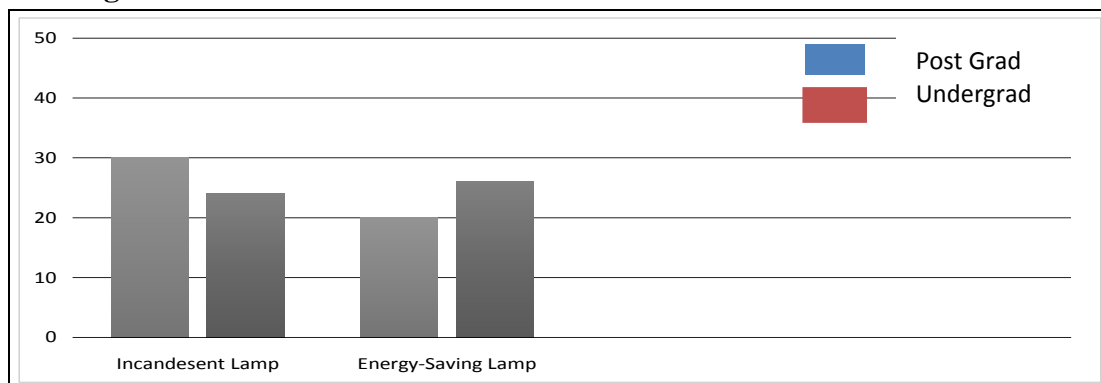
Gender	
Male	75%
Female	25%
Age (yrs.)	
Below 20	
20-29	100%
30-39	
40 or above	
Residence	
In Dhaka City	86%
Outside Dhaka City	14%

Monthly Household Income ('000 Tk.)	
Below 30	9%
30-40	9%
40-50	50%
More than 50	32%
Religion	
Islam	83%
Hindu	16%
Buddhism	0%
Christian	1%

Source: Field Study

The results are of 50 students for undergraduate and 50 students for post-graduate. Undergraduate are from International Islamic University Chittagong, for the postgraduate State University Bangladesh. 75% of the respondents are male, and female are 25%. Among them, 86% student live in Dhaka city and 14% are outside of Dhaka. However, regarding their monthly household income, 9% earns BDT 30,000, 9% earns monthly 30,000-40,000, around 50% of them earn 40,000-50,000 and 32% has monthly income more than 50 thousand. Most of the student means, around 83% are Muslim, 16% are Hindu, 0% Buddhism and 1% Christian.

5.2 Usage of illumination



Illumination for 30% post graduate students use incandescent lamp and 20% students use energy saving lamp. On the other hand, 24% undergraduate student use incandescent lamp and 26% students use energy saving lamp. Some people choose incandescent because of the high price of energy saving lamp and the quality. They said yes we want to use energy saving lamp but need to improve light quality luminous to see everything. Although, some students said, they have no idea for using energy saving lamp because energy saving light is not powerful to see everything. Chart is given below.

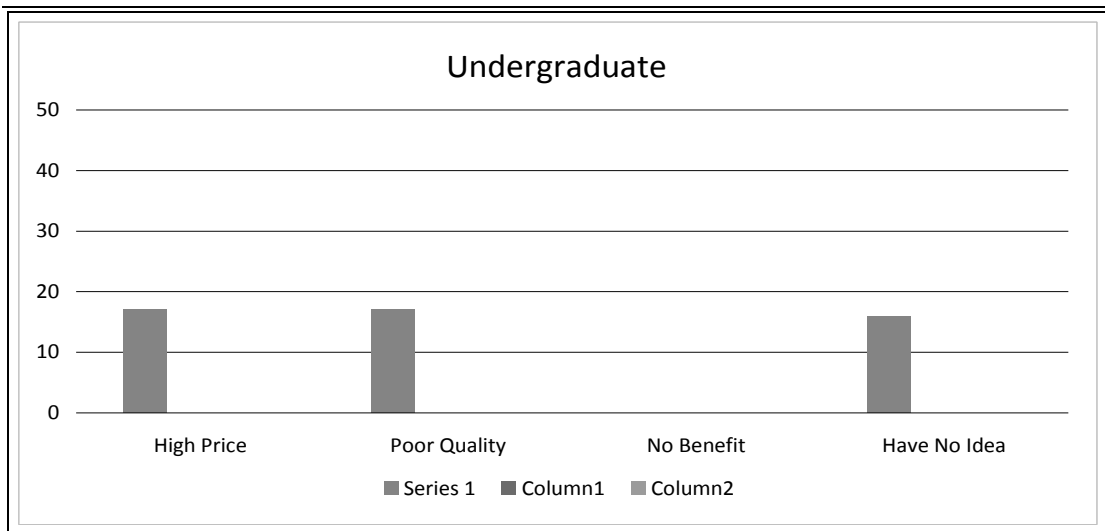
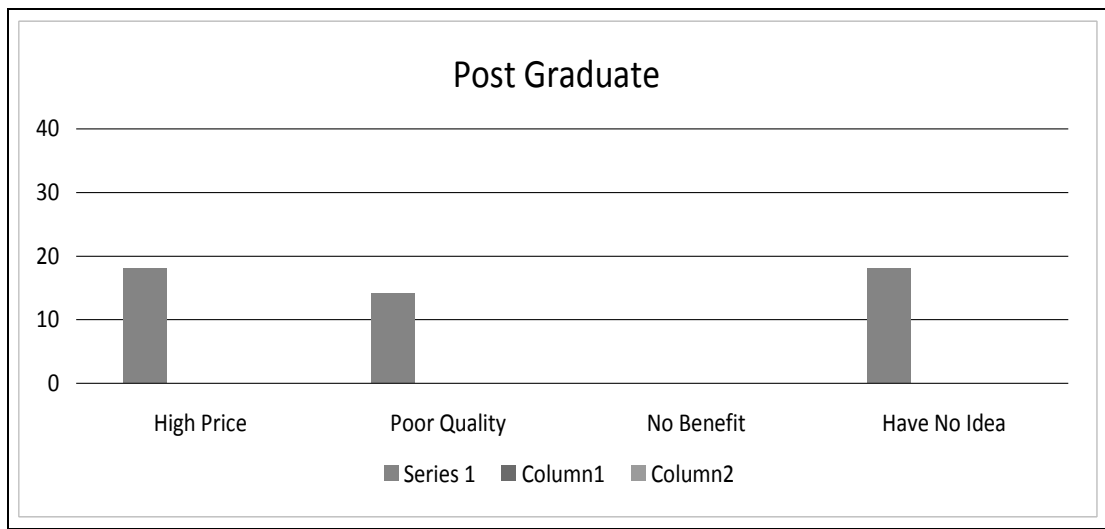
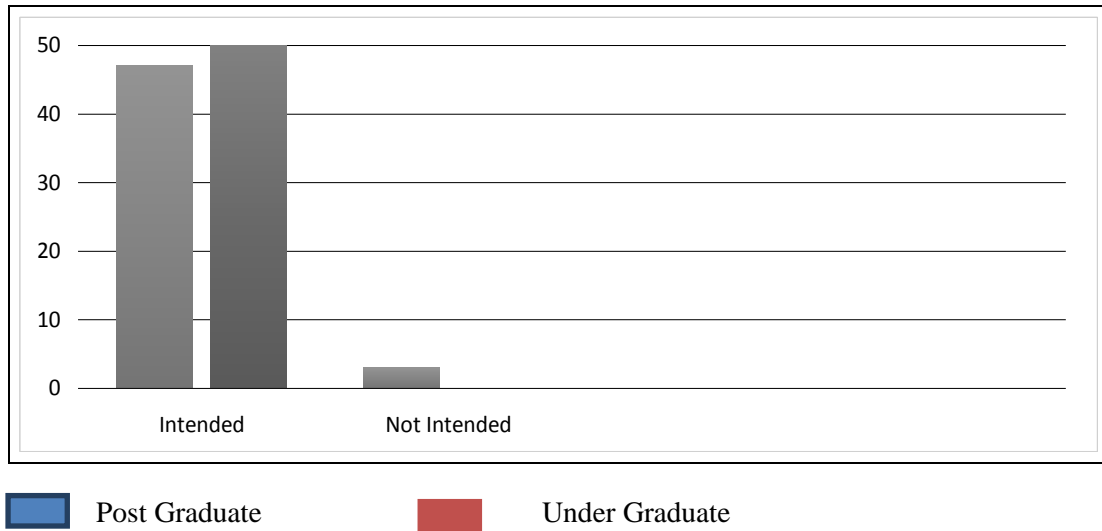


Table 2: Rank of using household application then often use

		Postgraduate	Undergraduate
1	Television	50 (100%)	50 (100%)
2	Fan	50 (100%)	50 (100%)
3	Refrigerator	50 (100%)	50 (100%)
4	Computer	50 (100%)	49 (98%)
5	Rice cooker	39 (78%)	43 (86%)
6	Micro-oven	41 (82%)	33 (66%)
7	Air-condition	35 (70%)	30 (60%)
8	Washing machine	6 (12%)	7 (14%)
9	Water heater	6 (12%)	5 (10%)
10	Induction cooker	3 (6%)	2 (4%)
11	Vacuum cleaner	4 (8%)	0

Source: Field Study

As shows in this table, the two most popular and effective appliance and communication environmental issues to the students are television and computer, which bring to the general student visible and vivid pictures of the true environmental problem all around the world. Students now a day spend most of their leisure time with the television and the computer with internet connection, specially under grade students who are so much excited to using internet. On the other hand, all students are using fan and refrigerator that cause the increasing use of electric power. It means, Bangladesh is considered one of the most arousing energy growth nations. More than a third of Bangladesh's 166 million people still have no access to electricity, while the country often is able to produce only some of the its 11,500-megawatt generation capacity which is not sufficient for us. Although, most of the student are using 2 or 3 electronic devices, 60% students using more than one set of the same device like, 2 or 3 television and personal computer for every person.



Most of students said they are intended to save their electricity in their household, they choose intended.

6. Major findings

- i. The research findings show that, most of the students choose illumination, because of the quality and high price, others think they don't have idea for using energy saving lamp.
- ii. If the energy saving lamp is subsidized, definitely they would like to buy.
- iii. If the energy saving information labelled on the appliances, student can have convinced to buy the energy saving lamp because of they understand the product efficiency.
- iv. Most of the students are not able to calculate electricity consumption of home appliances but they feel conscious about electricity savings in their household.
- v. All most every student said about using of lights / fans/ air condition and computer they switch of the power appliances.

7. Recommendation

- i. Bangladesh government should practice green computing for every university.
- ii. University authorities should include pro-environmental behaviour events and make it compulsory for every student.

- iii. We should effectively reduce our carbon foot print. By reducing pollution, we are reducing the amount of energy that is being used and generated a greener and cleaner environment.
- iv. By switching to renewable energy sources like solar plants. We can save considerable amount of money every month from our electric bill.
- v. Family orientation training builds important behaviours about green product and saving of more electricity consumption and the cost as well.

8. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to make an analysis of consumption pattern of university students. With this study, it has been found that, consumer preference has shifted from non-green products to green products. Consumer awareness for environmental concern is high. In future, more and more consumers will prefer green products. Companies, which can establish themselves with a green image, will have distinctive advantages in the present marketplace. Due to time and some other resource constraints it was not much possible to make justice on this study. But, this is no doubt a potential research area, more and details research work is needed to focus more on green consumption from which all stake will become aware of stabilise and sustainability of the environment as a whole.

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