

Factors That Influencing Green Purchasing Behaviour Towards Ecological Product Among Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) Students

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Abstract: Nowadays, numerous activities have been conducted by all the people and government to support green concept. However there is still exist issue regarding the environment occur in Malaysia such as the cost of waste management from 2016 to 2017 are keep increasing from RM200 million to RM250 million. There were three objectives in this research that are (1) To examine the social influence effecting green purchasing behaviour towards ecological product; (2) To examine the environmental concern in influencing green purchasing behaviour towards ecological product; (3) To examine the environment attitude in influencing green purchasing behaviour towards ecological product. To complete this study, researcher used Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to underpinning the study. Primary data were collected through questionnaire by using 5-point likert scale in order to investigate our research objective. 268 sets of questionnaire were collected from University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students. The SPSS was used to analyse the descriptive analysis, reliability test, multiple regression and Pearson correlation analysis. The result show that the there are two significant factor that influence green purchasing behaviour towards ecological product among students that is social influence and environmental attitude but not significant factor is environmental concern. Thus, this study also suggested future research could be done, whereby researcher could get larger sample size and by doing sample using actual purchaser of ecological product to improve the understanding of green purchasing behaviour.

Key words: *Green Purchasing Behavior, Social Influence, Environmental Attitude, Environmetal Concern*

INTRODUCTION

The government recently has established the Ministry of Energy to accommodate the growing need and importance of green technology towards sustainable progress by develop act on the environment protection. The government also has taken a holistic approach known as AFFIRM that stands for Awareness, Faculty, Finance, Infrastructure, Research, Development and Commercialization and Marketing for environment preservation. However, global warming is a serious world issue faced by all the people in recent years that cause melting glaciers in the Arctic. The Arctic sea ice was 40% decrease in melting since 1960s and now its melting level is at a dangerous rate that is 9% per decade. Therefore, if the rate of melting continues to increase without actions are been done by people, the Arctic can be free from ice by 2040

[1]. Global warming will weaken the ozone layer and cause people exposure to ultra-high radiation levels due to ozone depletion and causing cancer sufferers. Climate that changes drastically is also one of the effects of global warming.

To protect the environment, numerous activities have been conducted by all the people and government in the world to demonstrate environmentally concern. For example, energy saving campaign has been done by switching off light for 60 minutes every year on March 25 that can encourage people to refusing unsustainable products and demand for sustainable options during their shopping trips [2]. In 2016, WWF-Malaysia launched the Earth Hour City Challenge (EHCC) to engage cities in Malaysia to minimise the effects of climate change. Next, another campaign have been done that is Non-Plastic Bag Day that cause retailers

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in Selangor are not allowed to provide polystyrene containers and free single-use plastic bags to customer [3]. In addition, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE) also organizes a National Environment Day in 2016 which was previously known as a Week of Environment Day every year from 21 to 27 October.

However, the government's efforts to preserve the environment still fail despite millions of ringgits invested in the campaign but the level of community awareness on the importance of maintaining the environment is still at a very low level and almost disappointing because every day our environment experiences pollution in various forms and dimensions such as from air pollution, water, noise to the seemingly endless garbage pollution, although there are many environmental education campaigns and awareness in various forms such as reading materials, media print and social are being worked out by various responsible parties [4].

This study is aimed to examine environmental concern, social influence and environmental attitude would influence University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students green purchasing behaviour. In a survey conducted by TNS group information in 2008, approximately most of Malaysian respondents answered that their views on company friendliness with the environment will affect their product and service purchases [5]. However, despite many consumers are aware of environmental issues and are ready to respond to ecological products or services, the survey showed that only 8% of respondents change their buying behaviour to save the environment. Environmental concern variable has been chosen based on study on factors that influence green purchase behaviour of Malaysian consumers [1]. This researcher's respondents is working consumer in Klang Valley and the result for his research is environmental concern have a significant relationship with the green purchase behaviour of working consumer.

The second variable is environmental attitude. It was selected for this study based on research conducted on youth attitude towards green product in Malaysia and Singapore [6]. The respondents are youth from age 17 to 25 years old in Malaysia and Singapore. The research result is that the environmental attitude has no significant relationship towards green purchase. The result is inconsistent to earlier study on buyers of green consumer product in shopping areas in Pretoria East, Gauteng [7]. The latter showed that environmental attitude have a significant relationship with green purchase behaviour. Similar inconsistency also happened on the research result for social influence variable [8].

In conclusion, the environment and all the independent variable have influence on green purchasing behaviour but the finding from the past research is not consistent, therefore I believe I should do research among Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students. In addition, students were chosen because they are the powerful consumer spending group and the most lucrative segment [9].

The research will benefit the researcher because by gaining the results of this exploration it can help other researcher in future to conduct their research by using same basis or factor. It also will give additional knowledge about factors effecting green purchasing behaviour. Other than that, the student will recognize what are the awful or negative impact using commercial product and furthermore what are advantage that they will gain if they utilizing ecological item. Moreover, it will benefit marketer or manufacture because this research will help them to recognize what is the component that they can use to pull in purchaser to purchase ecological product as opposed to commercial product. Then, it also gives benefits to University Malaysia Perlis (UNIMAP) because the results of this research can help the university to know their student behaviour hence it can help the association using a right technique to influent their student to purchase ecological product as a support to reduce the environment issues such as global warming.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

The planned theory of behaviour is a continuation of the Theory of Action required by the boundaries of the original model in controlling the behaviour in which people have incomplete affections [10]. "The intention to conduct in various types of behaviour can be predicted with high-precision attitudes towards behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control and this goal along with behavioural control, contributing many variations in actual behaviour" [10]. Many former used Theory of Planned Behaviour model such as in studying on organic food [11]. Thus, this theory can also be applied in research regarding the behaviour of buying green product, which is categorized as one of ecological product. Consumers who care about the environment will be environmentally friendly and support green purchasing [12].

Green Purchase Behaviour (GPB)

Green purchasing behaviour means particular type of environmental friendly behaviour that consumer expresses to environmental their care [12]. In

another definition green purchasing behaviour was refer to using of product that can be recyclable, give good effect to the environment and ecological concern [13]. Increasing consumer concern of environmental problem will increase demand for ecological product. The variables such as attitudes, values, belief or knowledge can be used to examine which factors will influence consumer choice to buy ecological product [14].

Furthermore, there were studies on factors that influence green consumer purchasing behaviour were carried out by former researchers on teenagers [15] and Australian female users aged 35 to 54 [16]. In other research, they were examining on Chinese consumers' green purchasing behaviour with the influence of three independent variables [12]. There is a research and further study is being done on how different in gender in various factors would influence Hong Kong adolescent consumers' green purchase behaviour [16]. Their research also helps in understanding the causes the distance or gap between attitude and behaviour in green consumer. In recent year, researchers have begun to studies about environmental label. A model has been developed for classifying consumer into four categories, that is "eco-friendly consumers", "growing green consumers", "price-sensitive green consumers" and "conventional consumers" [17]. Researcher have done further investigated the different level of Australian consumer with influence of label environment. Consumer can be grouped into either they found environment label are difficult to understand or they can read labels and are willing to buy green product despite their low-quality product [15].

Besides that, the different culture and socioeconomic condition would cause different factors to be tested on the consumer green purchasing behaviour in that country. Thus, the variables used by researcher to determine the consumer green purchasing behaviour also vary between them. Theory of Reasoned Actions model was used to determine the Malaysian consumers' green purchasing behaviour. The variables used in their study are "environmental attitudes", "government initiatives", "peer pressure", "green buying intentions" and others [18] [16].

Social Influence (SI)

Information that has been given by public people can have a big effect or a huge impact on user known as social influences. Social dynamics in which an individual to associate with others to deliver similar quality was identified as homophile [19]. In other words, it can be recognized as a situation that has the same beliefs as the person they are interact with.

Similarly on the following situations such as how much the person gain knowledge about ecological products through their family, how much discussion about ecological products with their friends and how much sharing of information about ecological products with family [20]. In addition, "social norms are equally no action cannot be done by respondents in view of views" [21]. Referral view can be defined as a partner's perspective, employer, neighbour, organization, family member or other reference.

Social influences represent subjective norms [8]. It was change behaviour of someone who is effected by the actions of others such as persuading and threatening [22]. In addition, environmental changes can change the mind-set and influence people's behaviour [23]. When people adhere to some of the things they do not have to adhere with, social influence can cause to a big shift in people's behaviour. This means people will buy green products when their social context encourages them to act green. It clear to point out that the provision of information to people is not adequate to change their behaviour. Social influence plays a vital role in consumer purchasing decisions to buy ecological products [24]. Other researchers also consider that peer as a social effect will affect users to buy ecological products in Malaysia [25]. Similar results were that peer influence is the important factor for green purchase behaviour among Hong Kong adolescents [16].

Social network and product engagement are corelated [26]. The social context of the consumer, such as friends, colleagues, and families that gives important influence and feedback on their use will ultimately affect their decisions on products and brand choices. In addition, there was a survey conducted found out that social media or social network had a significant impact on consumer buying behaviour [27]. For example, people sharing information regarding the environment activities such as Earth Hour and it show that social media role is important in training the public regarding environmental activity. There was a research conducted on factors influencing the green purchasing behaviour of Penang environmental volunteers [8]. The researcher respondent is all Penang's volunteers who participated in environmental related activities and the result for his research is social influence have significant relationship towards green purchasing behaviour. Therefore, based on the above literature review, the study would like to conclude the following relationship:

H1: Social influence has positive relationship with green purchasing behaviour

Environmental Attitude (EA)

Attitudes it means being a good and bad choice of belief on something specific individuals, objects, actions or things, which may be transferred to the purpose of doing so [28]. In other words, the attitude is influence by one's opinions and morals and is expressed as a positive and negative assessment of the individual who does certain things behaviours [29]. Environmental attitude can be defined as "educated tendencies to respond less to environment" [30]. In addition, it also refers to individual judgment judgments and it taps individual cognitive assessments on the value of environmental preservation [16]. It will influence the consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions. Past research has identified positive relationships between environmental attitudes and the environment [31]. Other than that, another study conducted among Egyptian consumers and the result show that consumer attitudes towards green purchases could influence their green buying intention and had a direct impact on the actual green purchasing behaviour [13].

Triggering a compromise process involved and trusting specific purchase options on ecofriendly products may be different [32]. Attitude is the important factor in predict the willingness of consumers to pay higher and it show that the price not a hindrance to consumer who are purchase ecological products [33][34]. Environmental degradation will be low if the consumer has a good attitude towards environmental preservation that will move it into real practice by becoming green consumerism [35]. However, some people argue that the government has important responsibilities in protecting the environment even if people are aware of and concern on their environment. Based on research finding, it founded that self-centred attitude led to consumer behaviour [36]. In other study shown that young Malaysians were willing to act greener to improve the quality of their environment [37]. There was a study revealed that the individual, industry, government and finance have an equally important role in fostering positive attitudes of individuals to environmental protection [38].

Attitudes and attitude changes may affect individual beliefs and have direct or incidental influences on their behaviour in different situations [39]. Although consumer attitudes towards the environment can have a significant effect on their purchasing decisions, it is not always the basis of their decisions. Numerous researches have been done on the correlation between attitudes towards the environment and purchase the product or planned use. It is understood that the more involvement with the environment, the more likely to buy

environmentally friendly products [20]. Research done on factors that influence green purchase behaviour of Malaysian working consumers in Klang Valley showed that environmental attitude has a significant relationship with the green purchase behaviour of working consumer [1]. Therefore, based on the above literature review, this study would like to conclude the following relationship:

H2: Environmental attitude has positive relationship with green purchasing behaviour

Environmental Concern (EC)

Environment concern has different definitions which rely on perspective and unstable nature [12]. Environmental concern is defined as the extent to which people are known of environmental problems and help the struggle to solve them or indicate willingness to personally contribute to their solution [40]. This statement shows that people are aware of the environment and they will do their utmost to find ways and use ecofriendly products in their daily lives. The action they can take is to try to minimize the use of paper bags. The statement was also supported by other researcher that environmental concerns related to consumer interest in the biophysical environment and the problem related to the consumer and the surroundings [41]. This means that consumers are aware of the environment, such as trying to reduce by using products that have adverse effects and environmental damage. In the literature, it is almost normal that people definitely concerned about environmental problems. As a result, not a weakness of environmental concerns, but some other factor that prevents them from carrying out environmentally-friendly behaviour. Several authors correlated environmental concern to environmental friendly behaviour. There was a study highlighted that environmental concern as "the level of emotional involvement in environmental issues" [16].

A study has been investigated based on the influence of environmental concerns on green purchasing behaviour. It has a significant influence on green purchasing behaviour among university students in Indonesia [42]. In addition, numerous studies have also been conducted on environmental concerns [43]. One of the studies showed that environmental concerns will be an important factor for marketers as they can easily target consumers who are aware of the environment [13]. High environmental concerns are expected to be due to health problems [44]. Meanwhile, young consumers in Hong Kong believe that environmental concern is the 2nd top predictor of green purchase behaviour [16].

“Environmental concern attitude in a person concept of self and the how far an individual perceives him to be an integral part of the natural environment [37]. Moreover, not same segment of the workforce react differently to green issues [45]. However, another study found that consumer who pay attention or concern to environmental issues will still shift to buying green product although the price is much

higher than less eco-friendly product [46]. People with more concern to environmental problems are desire to buy green products [47]. Therefore, based on the above literature review, the study would like to conclude the following relationship:

H3: Environmental concern has positive relationship with green purchasing behaviour

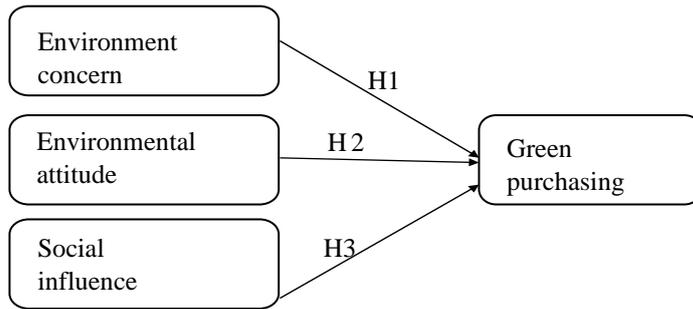


Figure 2.1: Research framework

METHODOLOGY

Variables

The researcher distributed the questionnaire among University Malaysia Perlis (UNIMAP) student for the quantitative method. The questionnaire is developed based on existing literature. All questions have been filtered and scratchy question bias words to retain the feeling of the respondent.. The questionnaire is consists of 3 part that is demographic, independent variable and dependent variable. The sections on independent variable and dependent variable use Likert-scale rating point which is from 1 to 5 (1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, 5=strongly agree). The measurement of environmental attitude, social influence and green purchasing behaviour are adapted from Tang Sok Mun (2014). Whereas the measurement of environmental concern is either adopted or adapted from Liebenberg, Philip (2015).

Samples

The survey was conducted among University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students to collect data. The population of University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students is 12,118. The sample size based on Krejcie & Morgan research method will be 375 students. However because of limitation of time to distribute the questionnaire to the students, only 268 of questionnaire are successfully collected. Among the respondents, 34% are males and 65.7 are females. However, there was a research about

factors influencing green purchase intention among university students in Kota Kinabalu that have only 195 respondents [48]. Besides that, a total of 30 copies of pilot test have been distributed and carried out before conducting formal survey to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire.

ANALYSIS

Reliability and validity

Coefficient value for Cronbach’s alpha is tested to measure the strength and consistency of the variables as well as internal consistency conformation of scales. The minimum acceptable range is 0.7 while 0.8 coefficient alpha values are considered good [49].

Variables		No of item	Cronbach’s alpha
Dep. variable	Green purchase behaviour (GPB)	4	0.786
Ind. variable	Social Influence (SI)	4	0.900
	Env. Concern (EC)	5	0.882

	Env. Attitude (EA)	5	0.848
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Hypotheses Tests

There is significant relationship between social influence and green purchase behaviour of University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students. This study gets the same result with past research which demonstrated that social influence has directly and significantly effect on green purchase behaviour [8]. However, there was study showed that has positive relationship but not give significant effect on green purchasing behaviour [43]. Inconsistent results are because of different respondent used.

The result for environmental concern and green purchasing behaviour of University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students has no significant relationship. However, researcher cannot find research that has similar result. Besides, green purchasing behaviour in Hong Kong are highly been influence by environmental concern [16]. Inconsistent result is because of different respondent used.

The result shown for environmental attitudes is significant related to green purchasing behaviour of University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students. This result is similar with past research which demonstrated that environmental attitude has significantly effect on green purchasing behaviour [7]. However, there was study revealed that attitude are not necessary use as a foundation for them in purchasing decisions although still could influence [20]. However, different target of respondents used to conduct the research may cause inconsistency result of this study as compare with former researchers.

CONCLUSION

This research is about the factor influence green purchasing behaviour of University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students. As discussed in past chapter, it can be concluded that factors which is social influence and environmental attitude are directly related with factor influencing green purchasing behaviour of University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students. Various approaches were used in answering the objectives that were formulated in this research. Several methods used to analyse the data obtained such as factor analysis, reliability analysis, multiple regression and Pearson analysis. By undertaking this research, it is proven that two variables is highly significant to factor influencing purchasing behaviour of University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students.

The implications of this research are consisting of two that is practical and knowledge. First is practical, campaign and environmental programme need to be done as to encourage people using ecological product and make them more aware about the environmental issue that happen in Malaysia because social influence are highly influence green purchasing behaviour. Second, this research also provides knowledge about the green purchasing behaviour. As from the result show that social influence and environmental attitude were significant related to green purchasing behaviour of University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students. However, environmental concern has no significant with green purchasing behaviour of University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students.

There are several limitation and weakness related to this study have been identifies by the researcher that have limited the understanding of the findings. Firstly, since the survey was conducted among a group of students in University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) and have only 268 respondent out of 384 respondent. The sample size itself is relatively small to accurately evaluate green purchasing behaviour of University Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) students and larger sample size is need. That happened because of time constraint to distribute the questionnaire among the students.. Secondly, this study is cross sectional study which is data only collected at one point of time. Purchasing behaviour of the students or other consumer might change from time to time due to many influences that appear. Therefore, this research is only able to describe the pattern of students purchasing behaviour at one point of time. Lastly, this research only focuses on three independent variables that are social influence, environmental concern and environmental attitude.

There are few recommendation for the researcher in the future and In order to solve the limitation that occur during this research. Firstly, researcher must expand amount of sample size more than 260 to conduct a more accurate and reliable data. Besides, the time given for conducting the survey should be extend in order for the researcher to get sufficient time to distribute and collect from large number of respondent. Then, the researcher also needs to equally conduct among the race, age and year of study among the student. In addition, the researcher can use alternative way or method such as questionnaire online that are more cost saving. Thus, the researcher will like to recommend that other researcher can do study on the remaining unknown factors to know which factors among the unknown factors are the most influence in influencing the students green purchasing behaviour. Lastly, it is suggested that the researcher should focus on respondent that are actually purchase and use

ecological product to make the result will be more reliable.

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