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CONSUMERS' ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS AND ITS' INFLUENCE ON PURCHASING OF ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

ELIJAH ADU GYAMFI

2022

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CONSUMERS' ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN AND ITS' INFLUENCE ON PURCHASING OF ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

BY

ELIJAH ADU GYAMFI

Thesis submitted to the Department of Vocational and Technical Education of the Faculty of Science and Technology Education, College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy degree in Home Economics Education

OCTOBER 2022

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: ……....……..... Date: .....

Name: Elijah Adu Gyamfi

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature: ……..…… Date: .....

Name: Prof. Christina Offei-Ansah

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated consumers' concerns about the environment and how it affected their preference for eco-friendly goods. The study was conducted in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area. This study was conducted using a qualitative research approach. The descriptive phenomenological research design was used. The study sampled thirty-six consumers. Data was collected using face-to-face interviews, observation, and a focus group discussion. The method developed by Colaizzi to analyse phenomenological data was used in this investigation. The results were broken down into overarching themes with supporting subthemes. According to the results, many consumers were vaguely aware of the concept of eco-friendly items and had little experience with them. Consumers were more interested in conventional goods than eco-friendly goods since the latter lacked the visual attractiveness of the former. The study's findings pointed to two channels (primary groups and advertisements) as consumers' primary information sources. Products that were both biodegradable and packaged in biodegradable materials were shown to be more appealing to consumers. Consumers preferred eco-friendly goods since they contributed to a healthier ecosystem. In light of these results, it is suggested that businesses ensure their eco-friendly products are high quality and appealing to a wide range of consumers. Since consumers have yet to realise the importance of eco-friendly products, manufacturers should take steps to make products more attractive and high-quality so that their products will attract consumers.

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DEDICATION

To my parents and my Brother Enock Kwarfo

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

PBC	Perceived Behavioural Control
TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Overconsumption and the overuse of natural resources have contributed to environmental degradation in recent years. This is a result of the world's robust economic expansion and rising consumer demand (Chen & Chai, 2010). Research by Sivaramanan and Kotagama (2019) found that the degradation of the environment is expected to accelerate if current trends in economic growth and wasteful consumption patterns are allowed to continue. The destruction of the natural environment has many negative consequences, including climate change, the depletion of the ozone layer in the stratosphere, water and air pollution, noise and light pollution, acid rain, and the spread of deserts. According to Allen et al. (2019), there has been an uptick in interest in environmental conservation and sustainable development due to the increased public awareness of global warming and extreme climate conditions. In addition, et al. (2014)658 claimed that the general degradation of the physical environment is forcing residents and organisations to make reforms to improve the environment's current state. Therefore, it is crucial to raise people's environmental understanding and consciousness and encourage a change towards more sustainable consumption patterns. According to Datta's (2011) research results, individuals can positively influence the world through their shopping habits and lessen their negative effects on the environment. The assumption here is that consumers' pro-environmental concern motivates them to engage in "green buying," or the practise of seeking out and making use of things that are good for the planet.

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Eco-friendly goods are defined as "items that do not affect the environment whether in their manufacturing, usage, or disposal" (Lonar et al., 2019). In other words, the potential pollution caused by these goods is much diminished, which aids in environmental preservation. All-natural or repurposed components can be used to create environmentally friendly goods. Typically, products of this type will be clearly labelled so that consumers may identify them quickly and easily. Others believe going green at home requires substantial time, energy, and money. The truth is many eco-products are available today that can help you lessen your environmental impact and make the world a better place to live. This is because of their low impact on humans and the natural world; eco-friendly items go by various other names.

Reducing environmental degradation will require technological advancements and shifts in consumer attitudes and actions (Gössling et al., 2012). According to research by Vezzoli, Ceschin, Diehl, and Kohtala (2015), companies all over the world are feeling pressure to meet consumers' increasing demand for environmentally sustainable product options across a wide range of product categories, including but not limited to apparel, automobiles, and electronic devices. Organic marketing blend product developers and manufacturers have a long-term competitive edge. Customers that consider environmental impact in purchasing purchases value ecological or environmental considerations. According to the research conducted by Jerzyk (2015), a firmer grasp of client expectations can help businesses obtain a more commercially viable strategy for success in the market. Shoppers who are ecologically aware and knowledgeable (Zsóka et al., 2013) tend to prioritise purchasing products that minimise their environmental impact.

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Consumers say can mitigate their impact on the environment and exert any type of influence they like through their purchasing decisions (Han, Hsu & Sheu, 2010). As a result, the researcher is very interested in learning how much consumers care about the environment and how much it affects their preference for eco-friendly goods (Prakash, Choudhary, Kumar, Garza-Reyes, Khan & Panda, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

My education at the University of Cape Coast, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, has helped me appreciate the weight of my choices regarding the goods and services I buy and consume. To learn more, I gathered anecdotal evidence by asking my close circle of friends, acquaintances, and neighbours if they are conscious of how their product purchases affect the natural world. According to what they told me, individuals do not consider environmental consequences while purchasing as long as the item satisfies their immediate requirements and desires. Empirical evidence would provide clear statistics on the extent to which people are aware of the existence of eco-friendly items and the critical nature of their purchase and use to protect the environment.

Owusu and Asumadu-Sarkodie (2016) state that there has been a growing public outcry about environmental issues due to the energy crisis, climate change, and other increasingly significant ecological problems. Using green products as part of one's regular diet is one solution to environmental issues, as shown by the research (Brisman & South 2014). Buying green products for everyday consumption is a feasible means of caring for the environment (Jyoti, 2019).

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Ecological concern and environmental knowledge have a critical and positive effect on readiness to purchase ecofriendly products, according to studies conducted in Egypt, Kuwait, Malaysia, India, China, and Brazil (Lin & Chang, 2012; Haws, Winterich, & Naylor, 2014; Akehurst, Afonso, & Gonçalves, 2012). According to the research conducted by Owusu and Asumadu-Sarkodie (2016) and Kumar, Manrai, and Manrai (2017), there is no substantial link between the two. The association of these studies reveals that there is inconsistency due to two leading causes: first, differences in model creation, and second, differences in the research area. The impact of ecological knowledge and environmental concern on the ability to purchase eco-friendly products varies with one's familiarity with and understanding of the local environment (Grzelak et al., 2019).

Previous research has mainly focused on urban areas in advanced countries (Bresciani & Ferraris, 2014). People living in developed regions tend to be more affluent, have higher levels of education, and be more conscientious of the environment (Vita, Ivanova, Dumitru, Garca-Mira, Carrus, Stadler, & Hertwich, 2020). However, research by Luo, Ranzi, Kong, Dong, Wang, and Zhao (2017) shows that things are different for those living in regions with lower per capita incomes and thus lower levels of consumption. Their product demand is satisfactory, but they can't afford many green options. Kumar, Manrai, and Manrai (2017) came to the same conclusion, stressing the importance of educating and inspiring people to make environmentally conscious purchasing decisions in these regions. Therefore, more significant research into consumer willingness to purchase eco-friendly items is warranted in the developing world.

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According to research conducted by Rezapouraghdam, Alipour, and Darvishmotevali (2018), "environmental concern is commonly seen as a quick precursor to green consumption aims," which indicates an individual's level of care for the planet. However, previous studies' findings on the strength of the link between ecological worry and green purchasing intentions are mixed. This analysis demonstrates that a key guiding variable, price affectability, which may affect buyers' green consumption decisions, was overlooked in prior study. There is no denying that the relative cost of green products strongly influences consumers. Some personal interests (like monthly payments) must be sacrificed to engage in green consumption due to the overall premium of green products (Nersisyan & Wray, 2019). However, the effect of such individual concerns on a buyer's assessment of the broader environmental benefits was studied.

Datta (2011) claimed that both environmentally conscious and well-versed shoppers did their best to stock up on sustainable options. Green purchasing behaviour has increased as a result of customers' growing concern for the environment and familiarity with eco-friendly options, as reported by Chin, Jiang, Mufidah, Persada, and Noer (2018). The increasing willingness of consumers to pay a premium for environmentally friendly items, as reported by Shin, Im, Jung, and Severt (2017), indicated that this market sector was poised for continued growth. A previous worldwide study (Tshabalala, 2016) revealed that the environmentally conscious consumer category is continually evolving, and customers tend to vary in adopting eco-friendly products and lifestyles.

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According to Harris, Russell-Bennett, Neale, and Fullerton (2010), the market for eco-friendly items has not yet become mainstream in Ghana because customers are still easily swayed by high-tech products. Academic research on environmentally conscious consumers in Ghana is scarce. The current study will explore consumers' environmental consciousness, familiarity with environmental issues, and openness to eco-friendly product options among Ghanaian consumers, all against the backdrop of this research gap.

Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to explore consumers' pro-environmental concerns and their influence on purchasing eco-friendly products in Greater Accra. Specifically, the study sought to identify whether consumers prefer to buy eco-friendly products and were willing to pay more for them to assess if their pro-environmental concerns, their knowledge of environmental issues, and their awareness of eco-friendly products affect their green buying behaviour.

Research Questions

1. What is consumers' awareness level of eco-friendly products?
2. What are the sources of information in making eco-friendly choices?
3. What is the consumer preference for purchasing eco-friendly products?
4. To what extent are consumers willing to pay more for eco-friendly products?
5. How does consumers' pro-environmental concerns influence their behaviour?

Significance of the Study

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The government, policymakers, customers, and researchers will all gain significantly from the study. As a result, the government is more eager than ever to conduct studies in this cutting-edge field of environmental protection. This is because of the findings of this study, the government will be able to examine the laws and regulations now in place that require manufacturers to adopt the usage of environmental management tools with greater scrutiny.

The findings of this study can be used by policymakers like the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Food and Drug Authority (FDA) to create stringent environmental rules consistent with sustainable development concepts and help reduce environmental pollution. It would also be helpful for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as they seek to assess and enhance their current efforts objectively. This will aid the agency in reevaluating its plans as needed and positioning it to carry out its mandate in accordance with the law. Simply put, once regulators have access to better data and a more streamlined information system, they will be able to regulate the environment more efficiently and economically. Manufacturers in the Region/Metropolis and beyond can use the study's findings to gauge their dedication to managing the consumers' environments that end up housing and using their products, and to reexamine their processes to make sure they're making the right kinds of environmentally friendly goods.

This research will fill in some gaps in research. This is so because it can serve as a foundational resource for future scholars interested in exploring this topic. It can be used in the classroom or the library as supplementary reading or research. Finally, the study will educate consumers on how they

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may aid in preserving environmental standards. This is because many industries in the developed world have shifted their production strategies to prioritise environmental factors in response to intense customer demand. Due to a lack of information, consumer awareness is low in this country. However, a new wave of environmental consciousness may emerge if the results are widely known.

Delimitation

Two large retailers, Shoprite and Game, were selected at random from the Achimota mall in the Accra Metropolitan Area to participate in the study. As a result of time constraints, the researcher evaluated this stage of the investigation. To collect this information, the study's researchers focused on a subset of customers at the selected stores: those who made pu rchases of environmentally friendly goods.

Limitations

The primary problem with the study, as per Casley, Lury, and Richard (1981), was the approach taken to collecting the data. The data was gathered through observation, one-on-one interviews, and focus groups. Consumers were interviewed one-on-one in stores after they had finished making a purchase. Behrend, Sharek, Meade, and Wiebe (2011) state that one potential drawback of this type of data gathering is that respondents may intentionally misrepresent their true opinions. Concerns about a person's level of expertise in a given field are often touchy. This is when they start to feel bad about how little they know. Respondents may give misleading answers during interviews

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concerning their familiarity with eco-friendly goods because they want to avoid what they perceive to be humiliation. The researcher used in-depth questioning to address this concern. Participants in the interviews were also asked to re-answer some questions in order to double-check their previous answers.

Additional challenges were introduced by the interview instrument itself. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured guide. All of the questions on the test were written in English. Not all of the people interviewed were fluent in English. In order for interviewees to comprehend and respond appropriately, it was necessary for the researcher to communicate with them in their native language. Some of the respondents' comments may have been distorted in translation from Akan to English, and vice versa, as the items were translated from English to the local language. This created an unnecessary risk to the results' credibility (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). To get around this problem, the researcher tried out a few different strategies (including teaching two native speakers of Twi and Ga how to read and write the languages) during the pilot phase of the study before settling on the most relevant and practical approach for the main research phase.

The research was limited to two stores at the Achimota Mall in the Greater Accra Region because of time constraints. Therefore, the results of this study may only apply to the people who took part in the study.

Hox and Boeije (2005) state that observation can be complicated by the physical arrangement of the stores from which data was obtained. The researcher had to approach the customers to get a good look at their faces and expressions and determine what it was that they might be searching for. The

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shoppers became aware that their every move was being watched. This might affect how they act. This study's results only apply to the metropolitan area of Accra, where it was conducted. Therefore, the results of this study may only apply to the people who took part in the study.

Organisation of the Study

This study is made up of five chapters: Chapter One gives an outline of the research. It also covers areas such as the background of the study, research problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, and the organisation of the study. Chapter Two entails the literature reviews from previous studies that have been conducted in the area of environmentally-friendly products, consumer buying behaviour. This chapter also looks at the conceptual frameworks and theoretical review derived from the literature reviews. Chapter Three consists of the research methodological approach, which focuses on the research strategy, paradigm, sampling techniques, and sampling size that were employed in the research. The data collecting tools, methods used, and how the data will be processed and analysed are also discussed in this chapter. Chapter Four presents the findings from the study. The findings are discussed and compared with previous research. Chapter Five will present the summaries and conclusions of the study with recommendations to the various stakeholders and their managerial implications. Also, future research in environmental concerns on consumer buying behaviour is discussed.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature on the issues relevant to the study. It highlights the influence of pro-environmental concerns on consumers' purchasing of eco-friendly products in general. It also presents the necessary literature review on consumer buying behaviour. This chapter also reviews consumers' willingness to pay more for eco-friendly products and services. Finally, this part of the study highlights the consumer's awareness of eco-friendly products in the Ghanaian market.

Theoretical Review

The theoretical review focused on the Ecological Systems Theory, the Buying decision process, the Consumer Decision Model, The Green Consumer Purchasing Model, and the Theory of Planned Behaviour.

Ecological Systems Theory

Using the lens of "environmental linkages and their impact on the force directly affecting psychological growth," Ecological Systems theory examines how people grow and change (Crawford, 2020). Researchers in the social sciences have been studying the ecology of human development to understand better how people develop to the various systems that make up their surroundings (Crawford, 2018). The theory is based on a hypothesis integrating biology, psychology, and sociology findings. The developing person is considered malleable within the social milieu of their environment (Bronfenbrenner 1987), and "human development is the product of interaction between the growing human organism and its environment" (p. 16). For growth

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to occur, the change must be experiential and long-lasting (Verbovaya, 2016). The Ecological systems theory offers a theoretical framework for investigating the factors that shape people's growth and development (Crawford, 2018). Bronfenbrenner (1987) built on the work of earlier human development theorists such as Lewin, Thomas and Thomas, Mead, and Freud. In his 1987 paper, Bronfenbrenner proposed a series of scales: micro, meso, exo, and macro, to which he later added Chrono. Brim (2012) had previously labelled the systems as microscopic, mesoscopic, or gigantic.

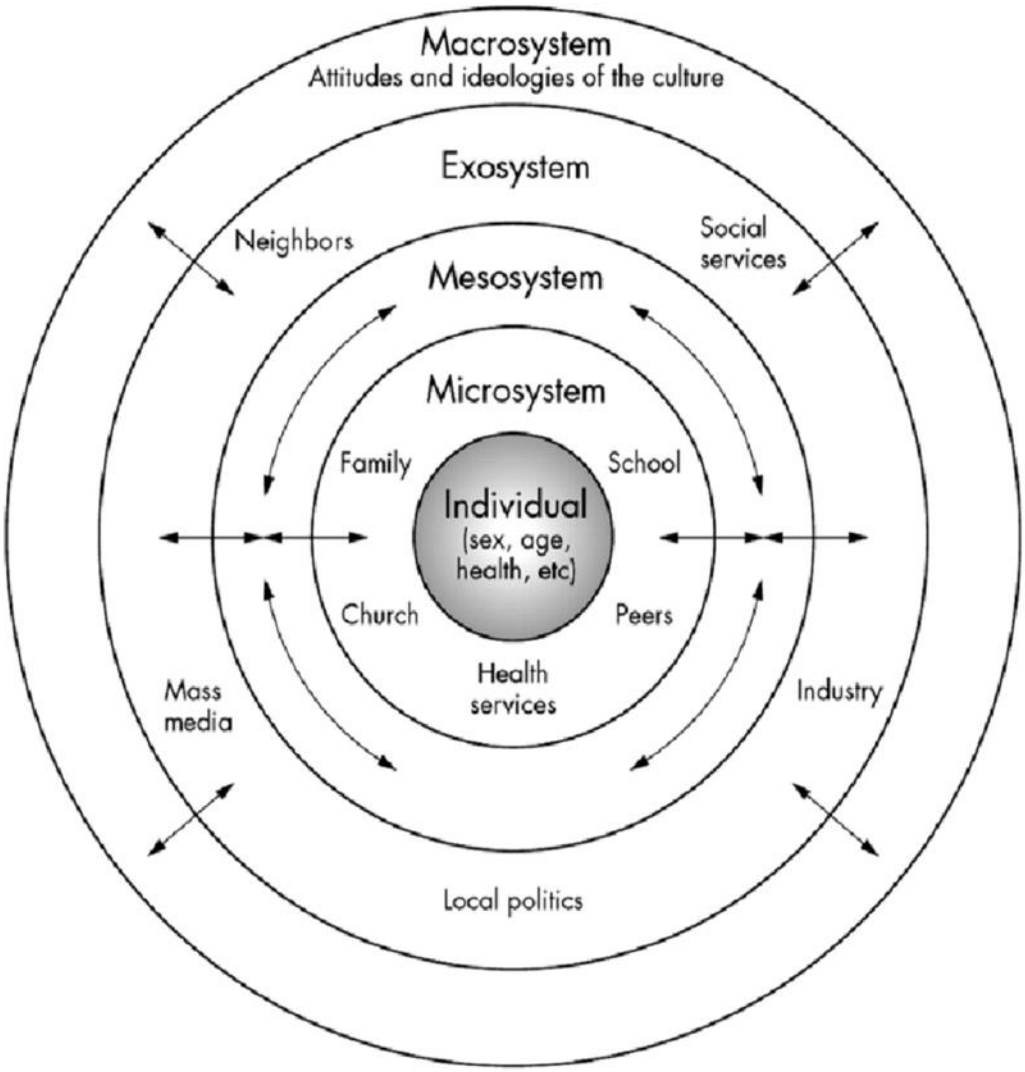

Figure 1: Ecological Systems Theory

Source: Neal, & Neal (2013)

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Microsystem

The microsystem consists of the person's immediate environment. Microsystem is "a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing individual over time in a certain location with distinct physical and material qualities" (Bronfenbrenner, 1987, p.22). A person's personality, beliefs, and temperament make up the microsystem. Bronfenbrenner (1989) later elaborate on this description by saying that interactions at this level can be social or symbolic and must be maintained in progressively intricate ways. According to MerçonVargas, Lima, Rosa, and Tudge (2020), a person's microsystem includes their immediate family and other household members with regular, in-person interactions. Those who interact with an individual consistently, whether or not they reside in the same household, may be considered part of the microsystem (Flagstad, Johnsen, & Rydstedt, 2021). For children, it might be school or daycare; for adults, it might be the office, gym, or even a coffee shop. Bronfenbrenner (1989) argues that this trophic level's significance must not be minimised.

Bronfenbrenner and Evans (2000) state that the microsystem lays out the processes affecting the individual's psychological growth and behavioural modifications. To learn how the influences on the microsystem function, first-hand experience is essential. Personal, in-microsystem interaction is more formative than oblique exposure to larger systems (Neal & Neal, 2013). The systems that make up the microsystem may affect the individual both independently and in concert, as Bronfenbrenner (1987) pointed out. With this differentiation in mind, we may go on to the Ecological System's second stage.

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Mesosystem

Mesosystem is the term used to define the second level of human ecosystem. The term "mesosystem" was coined by Bronfenbrenner (1987, p. 40), who described it as "a system of microsystems". The mesosystem consists of the interconnections between the various subsystems that make up an individual's existence. Simply put, the interplay between the classroom and the living environment is a mesosystem. Bronfenbrenner hypothesised that in an individual's life, several systems might interact (either positively or negatively). The mesosystem layers result from the interactions between various microsystems (Trego, & Wilson, 2021). Further, synergy, or "the combination of developmentally instigating or inhibiting traits and processes (that may be) present in each context," is a key notion in the evolution of mesosystems (Renn, & Arnold, 2003). There is a good illustration of this in the educational system. A student's microsystem is comprised of the classroom, fellow students, and teacher. A student's mesosystem includes their school, their fellow students, and the teachers and administrators there. According to Neal and Neal (2013), the individual is an integral part of all levels of analysis, from the microscopic to the macroscopic. The third layer of the ecological environment consists of systems that affect one of these settings but do not involve the individual.

Exosystem

Crawford (2020) argues that, like the mesosystem, the exosystem consists of interacting microsystems. However, unlike the mesosystem, at least one of the exosystem's microsystems cannot include the exosystem's central person. The example of a parent's place of work is straightforward. Despite the fact that the

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child has no stake in the business, the child may be affected by it if the parent is forced to work long hours and misses important school functions or comes home from work feeling worried. A child's micro and mesosystems cannot include the workplace because the child does not participate in it. Therefore, this effect takes place on the exosystem scale. Lower systems make it easy to understand the concept of reciprocity. It's easy to see how a parent could have an impact on their child and how the youngster could have an impact on his or her parent. The mesosystem is small enough for a child to impact both parents and educators significantly, and all three can, in turn, have an impact on one another. In the exosystem, this idea is just as valid. Although the individual is not physically present in the exosystems, there is still a two-way influence flow. It is possible for parents to be affected by both their job environment and their home environment and vice versa. A child's illness can force a parent to stay home from work, which can have consequences for the economy even if the child isn't part of it.

Macrosystem

We might think of the macrosystem as the larger social and cultural framework in which individuals operate (Minkkinen, 2013). Crawford (2020) suggests that the macrosystem establishes a pattern of interaction between and among the various sub-, meso-, and exo-systems. You might think of the macrosystem as the blueprint for your culture or subculture (Crawford, 2020). Bronfenbrenner outlined how a family's culture emerges from inside the context of its own structure, or microsystem. The mesosystems and exosystems of the people in that family have an impact on this. Moreover, society and culture as a whole affect all of these systems (Moore, Riddell, & Vocisano, 2015). Cultures

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within groups, opportunity structures produced by systems and experienced by individuals, and patterns of interchange between groups are all given specific consideration in Bandura's (2002) research. Later works by Bronfenbrenner (1987) included the pattern of social exchange as an extra crucial part of the macrosystem. Think of a family that has immigrated to the United States from a country with a very different culture. They might use a minority language at home. Children, thanks to school and socialisation within their micro- and mesosystems, may be able to speak both their native language and the majority language. This is in contrast to adults, who may not speak either. While these forces operate on a variety of scales within specific systems, they are frequently driven by the larger-scale impact of the situation, the time, and the location. As a result, this may encompass the full eco-perspective.

Chronosystem

Time was not a factor in Bronfenbrenner's original conception of the Ecological Systems theory of human development. Crawford (2020) later included this idea, stating that many human developmental theorists had only considered the passage of time in relation to the ageing process. In other words, as time passes and a person ages, they naturally progress and improve as a result of their changing biological circumstances. The concept of time is brought into the human development ecological system via the incorporation of the chronosystem (Hong, Lee, Park, & Faller, 2011). The time a person spends alive and developing is part of this equation as much as the natural aging process. Bronfenbrenner (1987) cites research that found that children and teens alive at the onset of the Great Depression were more adversely affected than those born shortly afterward. Children in the United States born before and after 9/11, for

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instance, were likely to have very different ideas about the nature of terrorism and what constitutes a safe environment. However, a catastrophic event is not required for the chronosystem to be affected. Time and location were considered. The concept of privacy and its implications would be seen very differently by a young adult living in the United States in the 21st century and by one living in the Brazilian rain forest in the mid-19th century. These crucial points were considered in the idea.

The Buying Decision Process: The Five-Stage Model

The conventional model of the consumer decision-making process, known as the "five-stage model," is discussed (Panwar, Anand, Ali & Singal, 2019). Consumers, according to this model, go through the following steps in making a purchase: identifying a need, seeking relevant information, weighing available options, making a final decision, and acting on that decision (Stankevich, 2017; Bakshi, 2012; Lamb, Hair & McDaniel, 2013). Each time a consumer makes a purchase, the model predicts that they will cycle through all the stages. Several studies (Seiler, 2013; Mallapragada et al., 2016; Gaspar & Antunes, 2011) suggested that consumers may skip or omit specific steps during routine purchases. Seiler (2013) concurs that customers only go through all five stages when facing a highly novel and difficult purchase situation.

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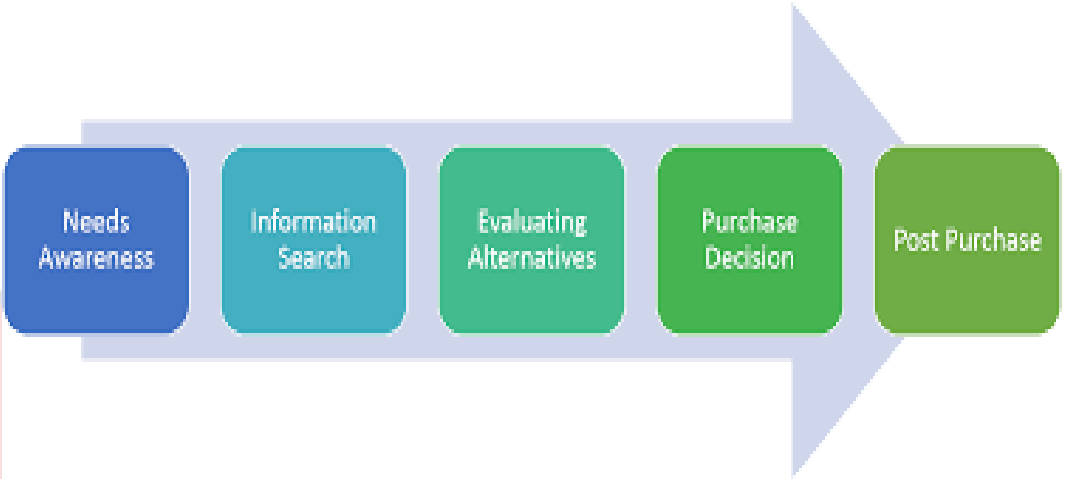

Figure 2: The Buying Decision Process: The Five-Stage Model

Source: Panwar, Anand, Ali & Singal (2019)

Need Recognition

There must be a mismatch between the buyer's current situation and their ideal situation before they will make a purchase. What this means is that consumers' wants and needs are not aligned. There is a "want-got gap" when this occurs (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2013). The consumer's decision-making process is set in motion by the imbalance or disparity in one of three ways: either a shift from the current actual stage to the desired state or from the desired state to the current actual stage (Samson & Voyer, 2014). The person then realised they had a want that wasn't being met and learned about a product that could. Hefer and Cant (2013) argue that the disjuncture between consumers' actual and ideal circumstances must be both material and tractable. Therefore, the "want-got gap" does not include daydreams and fantasies.

Consumer's awakening to the existence of demand follows their encounter with some kind of stimulation, whether mental or physical (Kawa, Rahmadiani & Kumar, 2013; Lamb, Hair & McDaniel, 2013). A sensory stimulus is any external factor that evokes an emotional response in the

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recipient. In contrast to the exterior effects, such as a friend's recommendation of a new product, brand, colour, or advertisement and sales promotion, internal stimuli are typically situations that occur naturally or biologically, such hunger or thirst (Stankevich, 2017; Kawa, Rahmadiani & Kumar, 2013). However, Perreau (2014) has categorised needs into three categories: functional, social, and a need for change.

Information Search

Information gathering is the second step in the typical consumer's decision-making procedure. It's also known as "buying research." This research aims to find knowledge that will be useful in addressing the issue at hand (Punj & Staelin, 1983). After deciding what they need or desire, consumers research the various options so they can make an informed decision. There are times when customers choose or buy a product with no prior knowledge of it (Solomon 2010). Internal and external information searches are equally valid methods. When a customer relies on knowledge about a product or service that has been stored in long-term memory as a result of previous interactions with the product or service, the consumer is engaging in an internal information search (Broilo, Espartel & Basso, 2016; Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2013).

The idea behind the external information search is that people look for data elsewhere. There are two types of external information sources: those under the control of marketing and those outside of marketing's purview (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2013). When it comes to product information, a non-marketing-controlled information source is one that is not in any way connected to the marketing of the product in question. Consumers can learn

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about a product through firsthand observation (Kawa, Rahmadiani, & Kumar, 2013), word-of-mouth recommendations (Kawa, Rahmadiani, & Kumar, 2013), and reports from organisations and individuals (Consumer Reports, blogs, activists, websites, Web forums, consumer opinion sites). According to Furaiji, Atuszyska, and Wawrzyniak (2012), family and friends are the most reliable informational resources. If you want to know more about a particular product, you can get that information from a marketing-controlled source, as the marketers behind that source are trying to sell you on that product.

Promotional activities (such as contests, exhibits, and rewards), salespeople, product labels (Loudon & Della Bitta, 1993; Lamb, Hair & McDaniel, 2013), the internet, and print and electronic banners, TV ads, and brochures are all examples of this type of mass media diversion (Bloch, Sherrell & Ridgeway, 1986; Stankevich, 2017). According to research presented by Lamb, Hair, and McDaniel, the vast majority of customers are wary of claims made by marketing-controlled outlets. This is because customers feel that advertisements only highlight the positive aspects of a product. Knowledge, self-assurance, product experience, and product interest all play a role in the consumer's decision to seek information external to the product (Furaiji, Atuszyska, & Wawrzyniak, 2012).

Buyer's evoked set is the product of consumer information searches. Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel (2013); Furaiji, Atuszyska, & Wawrzyniak (2012). Consumers' go-to or preferred brands, from which they'd consider others before making a final decision. Solomon (2004) noted in his earlier work that the evoked set is typically composed of a handful of brands sharing comparable characteristics. According to Stankevich (2017), the length of time

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devoted to this stage typically depends on the consumer's prior purchasing experience, the level of risk involved, and the level of interest in the product or service.

Evaluation of Alternatives

The buyer is now in the decision-making phase of the purchasing process. The customer bases their choice on the data they've collected and the knowledge they've retained. The resulting collection of products can then be evaluated against these criteria, allowing users to narrow down the options. The evaluation is completed by classifying products or services according to their advantages and disadvantages (Stankevich, 2017). It is not uncommon for customers to either not evaluate their options at all or to do so very briefly. Because making a purchase is so routine to them, they tend to rely on gut feelings and impulses (Lautiainen, 2015). At this point, shoppers are free to pursue their best possible offer, therefore the process is highly personal (Stankevich, 2017). The "best bargain" for a customer, as defined by Stankevich (2017), is the product or service that meets the customer's specific needs. There are many factors that could be considered, such as cost, quality, name recognition, product positioning, availability, and the results of using the product.

Purchase

An interested buyer is ready to buy at this point. The consumer opts for the most sought-after brand. When a consumer has settled on a product, Stankevich (2017) explains, the next step is to follow through with the purchase. However, there are occasions when consumers do not go through with a purchase because they are not sure when is the best time to shop, what

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brand or type of product to buy, where to shop, or how to pay for the merchandise (Stankevich, 2017). Kawa, Rahmadiani, and Kumar (2013) note that the confidence customers have in the product as developed by marketers and the attitude of other people towards the product are elements that affect consumers' purchasing decisions.

Post-purchase Behaviour

In this phase, whether or not our products and services live up to our customers' expectations. That is if they are pleased or displeased with the goods. According to Lamb, Hair, and McDaniel (2013), the price and the consumer's anticipated degree of satisfaction are the two most important factors in determining post-purchase behaviour. If a product provides the desired satisfaction for the target market, as revealed by Balakrishnan, Dahnil, and Yi (2014), the purchaser is more likely to remain loyal to the brand. Stankevich (2017) argues that similar to when a product meets or surpasses a customer's expectation, that customer will become an advocate for the brand and may sway the purchasing decisions of others.

Consumer Decision Model

This model is sometimes referred to as the “Engel-Blackwell-Miniard Model.” Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell created it for the first time in 1968. Figure 3 depicts the most recent release of this revised model in 2001.

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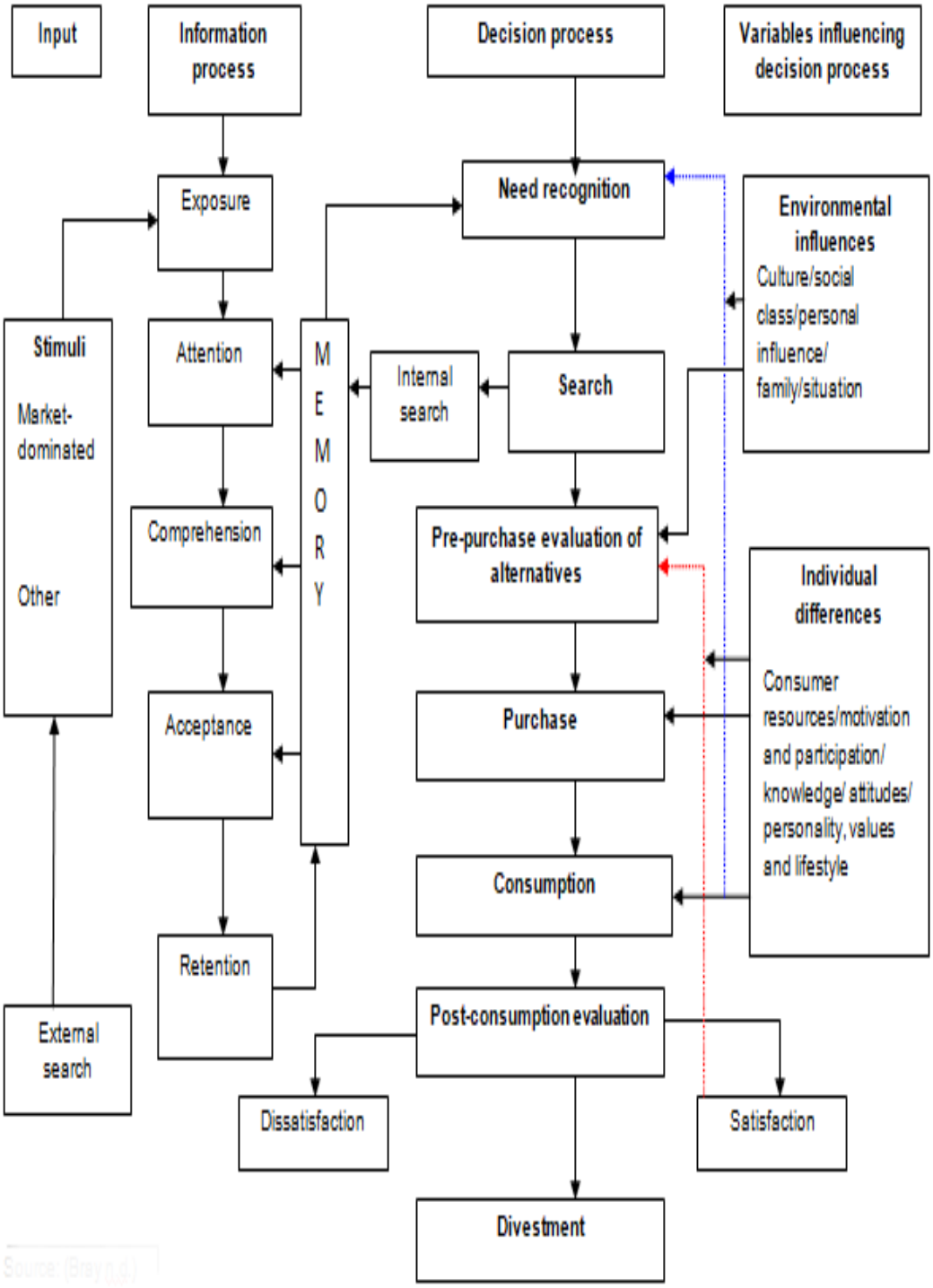

Figure 3: Consumer Decision Model

Source: Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1995)

Several features of this model are similar to those described in the Theory of Buyer Behaviour (Howard & Sheth 1969), although the structure, presentation, and relationship of the variables here differ slightly from those in

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the earlier work. The approach is structured on a seven-stage decision-making process, including: need recognition; information search; appraisal of alternatives; purchase; post-buy reflection, and divestiture. There are two primary influences on these choices.

A consumer's decision is shaped mostly by internal factors, such as the stimulus they are exposed to and how they respond to it, as well as by external factors, such as cultural norms and personal preferences. Personal, family, situational, societal, and cultural factors all count as environmental factors (Wikström, 2014). However, personality, beliefs and lifestyle, information, attitude, motivation and involvement, and consumer resources all vary from person to person. Studies on this topic have been conducted (Erasmus, Boshoff, & Rousseau, 2001; Kardes, Cline, & Cronley, 2011).

The first step in using the model is identifying the need. Consumers reach this point when they see a discrepancy between where they are now and where they would like to be (Bardhi, & Eckhardt, 2012). A combination of processed sensory inputs, the environment, and the individual's own characteristics drives this process (Greven et al., 2019). The consumer conducts research after recognising a requirement. The shopper looks for what they want both within themselves, drawing on their own personal store of past experiences, and without themselves, using merely the available resources. According to the authors, the model can be used to explain scenarios requiring either extensive or restricted problem-solving by adjusting the level of involvement of the consumer in each stage of the model (Loudon & Della Bitta, 1993; Loudon, & Della Bitta, 2002). Specifically, the nature of the problem being solved determines the scope of the informational search. It is

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common practise to do extensive external information searches when confronted with novel or complex consumption issues, while lesser issues may rely merely on a streamlined internal search of past behaviour. According to Fang, Zhao, and Zhang (2016), there are five steps involved in processing data before it is stored and used.

There are five steps: initial encounter, processing, buying in, and long-term memory. Consumers form opinions, stances, and intents to buy as they consider their options. Both the surroundings and the person being evaluated have an impact on the evaluation process. The paradigm only allows for the outcome of a purchase, and intentions are described as the immediate antecedent to a buy. While the intermediary role of inhibitors in the chain of events leading to a purchase is not portrayed, it is again stated that environmental and personal influences act on purchases. This is cited as an example of environmental factors (Gao et al., 2021).

It is unclear what exactly falls under this category. However, it may include things like a lack of time or money that prevent the consumer from making a purchase (Broekhuizen, 2006). After making a purchase, consumers often reflect on their experience to use that insight in their further online research and worldview construction. As the last step in the consuming cycle, divestment acknowledges that the item purchased will likely be discarded after use.

However, some scholars believe the model is a mechanical simplification of human behaviour (Loudon, 1993; Foxall, 1980). Because of this, putting it into practise is a challenge. Again, they emphasise that the model fails to account for the variety of individual differences that go into

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each person's processing of information. They also noted that the model lacks clarity for real-world applications due to an absence of definitions for key model variables. Engel-Blackwell-Model Miniar's was shown to be inappropriate for a real-world setting by Viksne, Salkovska, Gaitniece, and Puke (2016), who conducted a comparative examination of consumer behaviour models. This is because the model is quite detailed and, therefore, very tough to read. In addition, the model does not display the probable association between distinct factors.

Green consumer behaviour consumer confusion

A study found that there were three overarching themes associated with scepticism toward the adoption of eco-friendly activities by green consumers. Consumer bafflement, veracity, and suitability were some topics discussed (Carrete, Castano, Felix, Centeno, Gonzalez, 2012, p. 470). Many think eco-friendly goods can be misleading and problematic to understand (Chen & Chang, 2013). Green consumption is driven by several interrelated causes, including consumers' perceptions of personal benefits, reduced risk and uncertainty, increased cost control, and a shift in firmly held cultural beliefs and behaviours. Consumers have little faith in eco-friendly items, and they do not care if the products' green promises are accurate or not, according to a recent study (Pickett-Baker & Ozaki, 2008). Internal, external, and situational factors all play a role in shaping environmentally conscious consumer behaviour.

Considerations from the outside world include schooling, the news, family, and cultural norms. Some respondents think businesses and the media are not always forthright with consumers about the drawbacks of eco-friendly

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goods (Kaufmann, Panni & Orphanidou, 2012). Tadajewski and Wagner-Tsukamoto (2006) rightly point out the need to interact with consumers based on facts. Knowledge, attitude, awareness, or participation are internal causes, while economic incentives and regulation are external influences (Carrete, Castano, Felix, Centeno, Gonzalez, 2012, p. 471). Customers have developed a negative attitude toward green advertising due to the lack of precision in many environmental claims. Because of this, it's less probable that people will start buying green goods (Cherian & Jacob, 2012).

The Green Consumer Purchasing Model

The purchase of environmentally friendly consumer technology is broken down into its parts in the green consumer purchasing model. General green attitudes, understanding, green purchasing criteria, challenges, opportunities, product acquisition, and customer response (Michaud & Llerena, 2011). Consumers' environmentally conscious preferences are influencing the drive to meet green standards. It's impacted by the shopper's level of awareness concerning the topic at hand and their level of transactional history (Michaud & Llerena, 2011). Purchase secondly, environmentally friendly criteria: Primary and secondary green criteria, including product research and manufacturer ethics, are developed when a consumer decides to examine a product. This can be done by consulting with people you know personally or through social media. Consumers' concern for the product's environmental impact transcends ideological divides. Also, obstacles and enablers: several factors influence buyers at various points in the buying process. The consumers' eco-friendly standards could be compromised by the existence of even a single obstacle. Green product labelling, product accessibility, and

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customer guilt are all examples of motivators. Time constraints, product costs, and knowledge gaps are often cited as obstacles. In addition, the impact of previous purchases on a consumer's values and knowledge informs subsequent purchases of the same or similar products (also known as "feedback") (Young, Hwang, McDonald & Oates, 2010). It is presented diagrammatically in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Green consumer purchasing model

Source: Young, Hwang, McDonald & Oates, (2010, p. 28).

When comparing green and non-green purchasing procedures, there are both commonalities and distinctions to be made. While the importance of the "need recognition" stage in essential purchases may change depending on the circumstances, it is generally agreed that it plays a part in all of them. In the beginning stages of both models, there is a shortage of access to vital

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information and expertise. When deciding between multiple options, the buyer needs to consider several criteria, such as price and availability. In both cases, customers consult with loved ones and acquaintances before making a final decision. In both buying processes, the last stage, feedback/post-purchase behaviour is significant for future purchases and affects future purchases and other potential consumers. Both procedures rely on the consumer, who must consider their own values and preferences when purchasing (Riquelme, 2001).

Theory of Planned Behaviour

Icke Ajzen put forth the Theory of Planned Behaviour in 1991, and it has since been applied to the study of consumer behaviour (see Figure 4). Both Ajzen and Fishbein's (1975) Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and its extension, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), propose that an individual's purpose can determine certain human behaviors to conduct that behaviour. One definition of intent is "the will to do something" (Merriam-Webster, 2017). According to Ajzen (1991), we may determine what drives our actions by looking at our intentions. According to TPB, the likelihood of carrying out a behaviour increases as the intensity of one's intention to do so does. However, there are academics who critique TPB by arguing that there is an intention-behavior gap when it comes to particular behaviours. According to research conducted by Nigbur, Lyons, and Uzzell (2010), for instance, there is a disconnect between the values of businesses and those of their customers who have strong ethical convictions. The results of their study demonstrated that buyers who stated they were morally conscious and would only buy ethical products actually bought more non-ethical products than they had intended.

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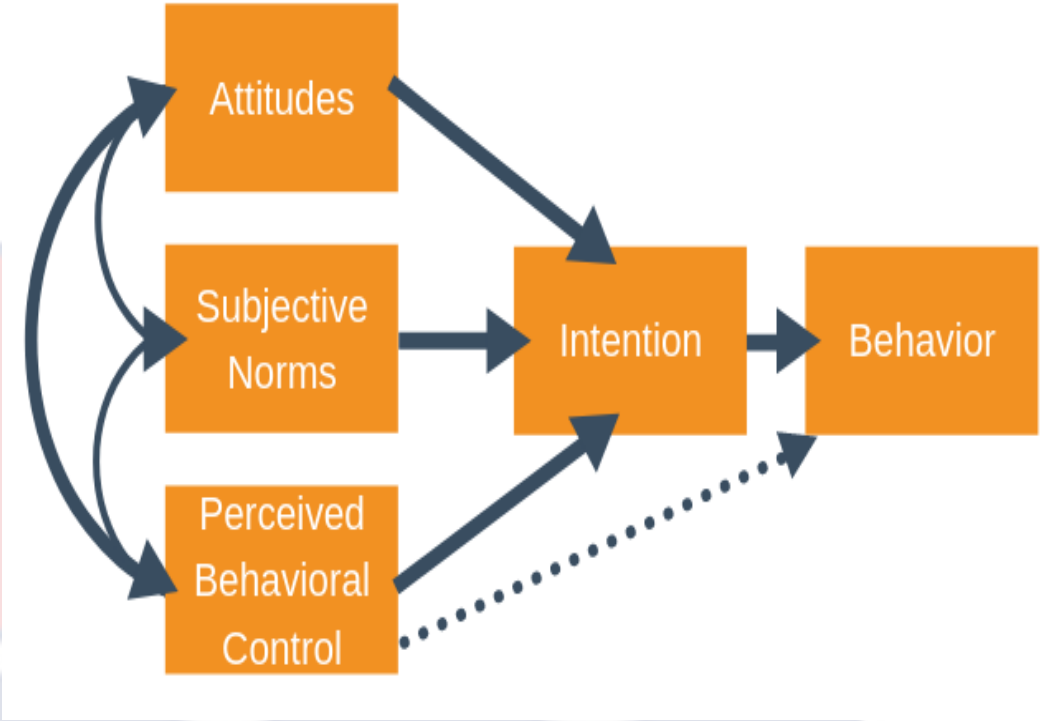

Figure 5: Theory of Planned Behaviour

Source: Ajzen, (1991)

According to Ajzen (1991), it takes more than good intentions to elicit action; the correct environment and adequate resources must also be present. The author postulates that the resources required are time, money, and specialised knowledge to alter a behaviour. Simply put, an individual's access to the resources and opportunities necessary to properly carry out a behaviour influences the chance of the individual achieving the behavior's goal. Furthermore, TPB shows that attitudes, subjective standards, and perceived behavioural control influence the intents that lead to behaviour (Ajzen, 1991).

Attitudes

Attitudes, according to TPB, are "the extent to which an individual favours or disfavors the appraisal of a behaviour or item" (Ajzen, 1991). The ABC-model states that attitudes are made up of three different factors. Affect,

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behaviour, and thinking are the three parts. An individual's affective response to a product is known as their "love" for that thing. Comparatively, in the context of behaviour, an object's worth is determined by how it has acted in the past. Cognition, which takes place in the mind, emphasises the traits and abilities one must have to form a particular perspective (Fiske & Taylor, 2013). Every attitude consists of these three parts, but the method in which they are ordered determines how that attitude manifests itself. Dommermuth, Klobas, and Lappegard (2009) state that the affective component of an attitude is associated with one's emotional state, whether that state is positive or negative. In recent years, many studies have emphasised the power of goods' emotional effects on people in an effort to alter their habits of usage and purchase. In addition, it is recommended that the value effect be considered while trying to motivate people to adopt new habits (Fiske, & Taylor, 2013). Even though attitudes can be created from a cognitive origin, Olson and Kendrick (2008) believe that when faced with a circumstance in which neither knowledge nor feelings are available, people tend to examine their past behaviour towards the object in order to form an attitude.

The industrial sector is launching eco-friendly activities, but research suggests consumers are still dubious about environmentally friendly products (Kahraman & Kazançolu, 2019). Consumers may be sceptical because they are not convinced that mass production, rapid distribution, and low-cost materials can all be environmentally friendly. As a result, customers are wary of buying these products, widening the chasm between their environmentally conscious ideals and their actual shopping habits (Kahraman & Kazançolu, 2019). As a result of increased awareness and curiosity about CSR initiatives,

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modern consumers are more likely to consider these factors while making purchases. For this reason, the company's efforts to promote environmentally friendly products are more likely to succeed if their customers have a favourable attitude (Cowan & Kinley, 2014). However, as Kahraman and Kazançolu (2019) point out, corporations often provide false or misleading information.

Subjective Norm

A person's intentions are shaped by the subjective norms of society, which in turn govern their actions (Ajzen, 1991). An individual's perceptions about how others would react to them if they engage in a given behaviour may be revealed by their subjective norms. People's ideas and societal standards shape their attitudes, which in turn influence their behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). According to the results of Bandura's (1977) research on social learning, people are highly influenced by their peers and often behave in ways that mirror those of their peers. As a result of his findings, he proposed the Social Learning Theory, which holds that people are not passive observers but relatively active information processors who actively take in and internalise their communities' values, customs, and beliefs.

According to the hypothesis, people will keep on acting in the same way unless consequences stop them. Ajzen (1991) argues that TPB is comparable in that an individual's sense of behavioural agency would be influenced by their own subjective standards and normative beliefs. The level of an individual's intention to do a behaviour will be affected by these elements, and this, in turn, will influence whether the behaviour is actually performed. Emekci's (2019) research reveals that the establishment of these

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intents is influenced by good and self-rewarding sensations related to the intake of green products. People's favourable and self-rewarding attitudes toward various products vary according to cultural standards. As a result, societal norms have varying effects on the formation of consumers' intentions with respect to various items. Contrary to what was previously thought by researchers, Yadav and Pathak (2017) discovered that subjective norms have a significant and direct effect on intentions and consumer behaviour. To what extent one's social group approves or disapproves of one's behaviour is an example of normative belief, which is strongly related to subjective norms (Ajzen, 1991). So, according to subjective norms and normative views, people act as they believe others in their social milieu would act or would find appropriate. When people's perceptions of the societal norm and their own normative beliefs are favourable toward a given behaviour, they are more likely to exhibit that behaviour.

It would appear that the theory that societal norms and normative notions influence an individual's buying intentions is equally applicable to customers' purchase intentions of eco-friendly products. Cowan and Kinley (2014) found that consumers were more likely to purchase environmentally friendly products as societal pressure to engage in environmentally conscious behaviours grew. In addition, they discovered a favourable relationship between perceived social standards and intentions to buy environmentally friendly products (Cowan & Kinley, 2014).

Perceived Behavioural Control

Perceived behavioural control (PBC) refers to an individual's estimation of how simple or complex it will be to carry out an intended

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behaviour. TPB holds that an individual's PBC is influenced by both retrospective thought and preparation for future challenges (Ajzen, 1991). One key distinction between Ajzen's TBP and his earlier Theory of Reasoned Action is the inclusion of PBC. According to Ajzen (1991), a person's behaviour can be reliably anticipated from their intentions alone when there is no perceived obstacle in carrying out the behaviour in question. Past experiences and anticipated challenges are the most important elements in PBC. Individuals are less inclined to repeat risky behaviours that have previously resulted in negative consequences because they will believe they have less opportunity to influence the outcome. In addition, studies have indicated that PBC of the behaviour will be higher if there are more perceived resources and opportunities and lower if there are less (Ajzen, 1991). In the field of self-efficacy, studies by Bandura (1977) have demonstrated that people's actions are significantly affected by how confident they are in their capacity to finish a task. This lends credence to the claims and findings made by Ajzen (1991) regarding PBC and its significance in foretelling behaviour. According to research by Alam and Sayuti (2011), consumers' familiarity with and use of a product has a significant role in shaping their decision to buy those goods.

Ajzen (1991) contends that the impression of a certain degree of behavioural control is crucial in deciding the consequences of behaviour and the motivations behind it. This is because only the person in question can judge how much influence they actually have over a specific behaviour. The ease or difficulty with which one observes a given behaviour varies from person to person. One's sense of being in charge of their behaviour may shift

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depending on context and what they're doing (Ajzen). As a result, there is both a PBC and a high PBC. Individuals with high PBC are typically more motivated, according to Kautonen, Gelderen, and Tornikoski (2013), who also suggest that such people are also more likely to be committed to seeing the behaviour through to completion. In contrast, a person with low PBC will be less interested in the behaviour and more likely to give up on it when the going gets tough (Kautonen, Gelderen and Tornikoski, 2013). How much personal bias and contingency (PBC) that individual experiences is a crucial determinant of whether or not they will actually carry out a desired action. One's intention to engage in a behaviour is also influenced by how simple or complex that behaviour is seen to be (Ajzen, 1991).

Intention and Behaviour

According to TPB, behaviour results from a causal relationship between goals and actions. Intentions are also viewed as a result of one's own personal standards, one's sense of being in charge of one's own behaviour, and one's overall outlook on the behaviour in question (Ajzen, 1991). According to TPB, the level of success achieved by a behaviour is directly related to the intensity of the original intention, as suggested by the work of Bashir and Madhavaiah (2015). This theory's assumption of irrational human behaviour is one of its major flaws (Limayem, Hirt, & Cheung, 2007). Bates and Kristofek (2008) proposed a gap between intentions and actions to explain why this is not always the case. This disparity suggests that individuals' well-intentioned plans to take action are not always carried out (Bates & Kristofek 2008). According to the discipline of behavioural psychology, "cognitive dissonance" refers to "the discrepancy between an individual's behaviour and attitudes,

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beliefs, and opinions" (Wassén, Norén Fahlman, & Holm, 2017). Given what has been learned about the benefits of eco-friendly products, this takes on new significance (Griskevicius, Tybur & Van den Bergh, 2010). But research shows that consumers do not always follow through on their intentions to purchase green products (Yadav & Pathak, 2016). There is a correlation between this and the difficulty and complexity of adopting sustainable living choices as a customer.

According to Ajzen (1991), an individual's level of commitment to a behaviour can be inferred by the amount of thought and planning they put into it. The stronger a person's motivation to act in a certain way, the more likely they are to do so (Ajzen, 1991). Regarding how this relates to people's decisions to purchase environmentally friendly goods, it may be argued that people with the best intentions and the most driving motives are those who do so (Barbarossa, & De Pelsmacker, 2016). (Barbarossa, & De Pelsmacker, 2016). Despite this, studies demonstrate that buyers form these intentions based purely on material considerations like style, fit, and price rather than ethical or environmental considerations (Kumar, Prakash & Kumar, 2021). In addition, Bates and Kristofek (2008) found that consumers have a hard time conceptualising environmental challenges because they are not physical. This may be connected to the research done by Joshi and Rahman (2015), who discovered a discrepancy between customers' sense of personal responsibility and their actual purchasing habits when it came to environmental concerns. Consumers have been found to appreciate the value of protecting the planet through eco-friendly practices. However, consumers prefer traditional

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products over environmentally friendly ones when making purchases (Joshi & Rahman, 2015).

Conceptual Review

This review explored the notion of mindfulness about eco-friendly products, its use in research settings, and its significance across different populations and contexts. This section comprehensively explains eco-friendly products as a complex construct and their importance by analysing existing literature and theoretical models.

Definition

Eco-friendly products are those aimed at the market with a low environmental impact and whose creation is tied to a product development process organised to account for potential environmental effects at every stage of the product's life cycle (Luzio & Lemke, 2013).

Eco-friendly Products

Market-driven goods and technologies that have a low environmental impact are called "eco-friendly" (Pearce, 2013). There is a connection between product innovation and the concept of "eco-friendly products," which is sometimes used interchangeably with "environmentally friendly products" and "green products" (Popovic et al., 2020). Products that conserve energy and/or resources and reduce or eliminate the use of harmful agents, pollution, and waste are sometimes referred to as "green" or "environmental" products, as stated by Singh and Pandey (2012). Jain (2021) provides a more all-encompassing definition by looking at the product across its whole life cycle. Thus, "Green products are defined and rated on a much bigger set of environmental consequences (e.g., material consumption, energy impacts, and

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carbon footprints) that occur during the design, production, and distribution phases" before the products even hit the shelves of stores.

Green product purchase decisions

"Green customers" are those who are conscious of the environmental impact of their spending patterns and have committed to altering those behaviours (Sharma, 2021). Research on "green consumer behaviour" focuses primarily on how eco-conscious individuals purchase (Sharma, 2021). Consumers have expressed their reasons for supporting green firms, buying eco-friendly products (Albayrak, Aksoy, & Caber, 2013; Biswas & Roy, 2015), committing to more ethical shopping habits (Quoquab & Mohammad, 2016), and paying a premium for eco-friendly commodities (Essoussi and Linton, 2010). According to Groening, Sarkis, and Zhu (2018), two primary considerations influence eco-friendly shoppers' purchases. One group of elements is built into consumers themselves, and includes things like environmental consciousness, curiosity, self-interest, and a desire to take action that will result in less waste and a smaller ecological footprint. Additional factors, such as consumers' perceptions of the product's quality and the general public's perceptions of consumers, fall under the category of external influences (such as product quality, safety, performance, price, promotion and impact on human health). Consumers' actual actions are the result of their routines, their familiarity with the goods, and environmental conditions like the availability of a sale or other incentive.

Supporting environmental protection

One of the primary motivations for eco-friendly consumer behaviour is support for environmental protection (Kumar & Ghodeswar 2015). Consumers,

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as further highlighted by Kumar and Ghodeswar (2015), seek out ecologically advantageous features related to product design and product consumption that have a smaller negative impact on the environment and make a tangible difference in environmental protection. Consumers want goods that are safe for humans, pets, and the environment, have recyclable components, and cause less pollution when used, as mentioned again by Kumar and Ghodeswar (2015). In this way, they acknowledge the value of green products in bettering the environment and show their commitment to environmental protection by their purchases and ownership of such items. They can also justify the extra cost of eco-friendly goods by explaining the positive impact that their purchase has on the planet. Because of this, consumers are more likely to have a favourable impression of green products and the companies that make them (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015). As a result, customers have a strong preference for green items and actually buy them at a higher rate than non-green ones (Khare, 2015).

Green product experience

The amount of prior exposure a consumer has had to similar green products is also a significant factor. It concerns shoppers' natural inclination to investigate the environmental benefits of green goods for themselves. They do this by independently seeking information about green products, such as their ingredients, environmental impact, how they work (Lin & Huang, 2012). According to Kumar and Ghodeswar (2015), consumers also learn from others and share information regarding green products. Product evaluation serves as a learning tool that educates buyers on the eco-benefits of green goods and ultimately shapes their preferences in favour of these products. According to

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Barber, Taylor, and Strick (2009), this affects consumers' propensity to buy green goods, improves their ability to make informed purchasing decisions, and increases their willingness to pay a premium.

Environmental Concern

Research has found that environmental literacy is a robust indicator of the willingness to make environmentally conscious purchases. Testa, Iraldo, Vaccari, and Ferrari (2015) state that there are two distinct types of environmental knowledge. The first is broad information on the state of the ecosystem that can guide ecologically responsible behaviour. The other factor is the consumer's awareness that the product was made in a sustainable manner, which can raise their confidence in their ability to engage in "green" consumption and their sense of mastery over their actions. Michaud and Llerena, (2011), for instance, utilised experimental auctions to analyse the readiness to pay for remanufactured items and discovered that consumers who are well informed on product environmental qualities are more likely to purchase ecological products.

Ha and Janda (2012) conducted a study on environmental awareness using data from a sample of 202 consumers who purchased small electronics and home appliances. They discovered a positive correlation between environmental awareness and subjective norms, which in turn had affected environmental behaviours. Pagiaslis and Krontalis, (2014) surveyed 400 Greek customers and found a similar positive link between environmental literacy and eco-friendly consumption. However, an examination of data from 1500 British consumers by Testa, Iraldo, Vaccari, and Ferrari (2015) revealed that familiarity with climate change was linked to higher levels of overall green

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consumption. There is, however, conflicting data in the literature that suggests familiarity with the environment is not necessarily enough to predict environmentally conscious purchasing decisions (see for instance Moser, 2015; Kenis & Mathijs, 2012). Therefore, it appears that knowledge on environmental performance of products and labels providing suitable and correct information is fundamentally necessary to allow ever more educated consumers to make conscious and reasoned decisions (Testa et al., 2015).

Consumer Awareness and Knowledge about Ecofriendly products

One of the first crucial steps in making a green purchase selection is acquiring the necessary knowledge about environmental issues (Joshi & Rahman, 2015). Adoption of environmentally friendly items typically begins with the consumer's own subjective knowledge, such as their familiarity with sustainable purchasing and eco-labels (Waris & Hameed, 2020). The ecological label is an important method of communicating environmental justifications to the consumer, even though certain customers may find it challenging to read and understand (Nyremo & Widerberg, 2020). Green consumers' use of guilt as a possible facilitator of green criteria in their selections highlights the usefulness of knowledge even further.

The lack of accessible information on the environmental and social performance of products and producers is another crucial factor to consider as a potential barrier for green consumers (Taufique, Siwar, Talib, Sarah & Chamhuri, 2014). Still, there are shoppers out there who are ready to sacrifice quality for the sake of environmental consciousness, and who would benefit from knowing more about the product's impact on the environment before making a purchase (Ali, & Ahmad, 2016). For instance, while many people in

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the Nordic countries recognise and trust several eco-badges, others have a propensity to place too much value on buying products with such labels (Leire, & Thidell, 2005). Consumers are aware of eco-labeled items (86%), but they do not understand what the labels mean (Göçer & Oflaç, 2017).

The lack of environmental information does not appear to be the issue at hand, it has been suggested; rather, customers are considering purchasing eco-labeled products but ultimately deciding against it. Consumers' understanding of environmental qualities and the need of labelling criteria has been lacking for various product categories (Song, Qin, & Yuan, 2019). Consequently, there is a possibility that consumers may have some limited understanding of these items. Informed product choices are necessary for consumers to make greener options. Certain buyers have doubts about the veracity of eco-labels. Product-related environmental information should be evaluated alongside the dynamic context and the buying decision in order to make the most environmentally responsible choice. How the product associated environment information operates in the marketplace is reliant on several elements in the purchasing moment. Organic consumers are brand loyal, as seen by their continued purchases of certified organic goods. They trust the label even when their knowledge is limited (Asioli, Aschemann-Witzel, Caputo, Vecchio, Annunziata, Naes, & Varela, 2017).

Another study discovered that consumers' purchase behaviour was unaffected by eco-label information (Delmas & Lessem, 2017). Eco-labels had a larger impact on consumers who placed a higher importance on environmental considerations than those who did not. This is according to recent research (Taufique, Vocino, & Polonsky, 2017). Consumers may be

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encouraged even more if the items' labels include concrete evidence of any environmental benefits the products may provide (Vanhonacker, & Verbeke, 2014). However, this might be difficult to achieve because not all aspects of the production chain are covered by eco-label projects. For example, while some consumers place a high value on sustainable packaging and shipping, eco-labels do not cover these aspects. No comprehensive labelling system exists; instead, existing schemes establish requirements for specific participants in the food supply chain while ignoring others that may be more relevant to consumers' overarching goals.

Additionally, the eco-label is thought to be giving off a non-committal vibe (Asioli, Aschemann-Witzel, Caputo, Vecchio, Annunziata, Ns & Varela, 2017). However, another study has investigated more factors that can influence consumer behaviour in this area of environmental concern. Examples of such factors include education, individual responsibility, and awareness of potential dangers to health. Attitude, norms and values, awareness, and habits are also crucial factors (Sirieix, Delanchy, Remaud, Zepeda, & Gurviez, 2013).

Product Labelling

The term "product labelling" refers to any policy instrument used by governments or other third parties to govern the dissemination of product-specific information to customers (Osman & Jalil, 2020). Use characteristics, such as cost, flavour, and nutrition, and non-use features, such as the product's environmental impact and the moral and ethical elements surrounding its manufacturing process, may be covered in the information presented. When it comes to making a purchase decision, the details on a product's label are

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crucial, as noted by Asioli et al. (2017). They went on to say that it identifies the manufacturer and provides details such as the product's date of manufacture, location, and ingredients. Certified (2017) found that labels can include information about a brand, such as a name or logo. There are several possible ranges for labelling policy, but the most common ones are obligatoriness (or lack thereof), clarity (or lack thereof), and uniformity (Teisl, 2003). To begin, there is often a spectrum in the degree of mandatoryness between labelling policies. That's how much information about their products manufacturers have to give forth. On the one hand, there are rules about what may and can't be included on a product's label. Labeling limitations, on the other hand, are entirely optional. According to Hagiu (2009), this means that manufacturers can choose whether or not to include certain details about their wares. This implies that manufacturers would have some say over what kind of information is included on labels. The second primary labelling principle is explicitness. The policy outlined here specifies the minimum required information for labels.

Environmental Hazard

Non-biodegradable materials are those that cannot be broken down by natural elements like air, sunshine, water, or soil (Mohajerani et al., 2020). Foam and plastic made of expanded polystyrene (EPS) are one such material. These make up a significant portion of the garbage that ends up in landfills, and they stay there for a good while. Methane, a potent greenhouse gas, is also created by them (Prakash et al., 2024). The rapid rise in global temperature has been linked to this gas, according to experts.

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According to research by Gbadeyan and Omolekan (2015), non-eco-friendly packaging materials contribute to both global warming and flooding. Sea levels rise as a result of the warmer temperatures. When there is a lot of rain, water doesn't flow out to sea but rather stays inland. Furthermore, sewage systems can become clogged due to the lack of decomposition in non-eco-friendly packaging materials.

The incorrect disposal of plastic containers and packaging also contributes to insect and pest infestation (Roy Choudhury, 2013). Common pests that may develop in garbage include mosquitoes, worms, and rodents. Communities in and surrounding pest-infested regions are at risk of contracting leptospirosis and dengue fever (Roy Choudhury, 2013).

He, Chen, Shao, Zhang, and Lü (2019) found that non-eco-friendly packing materials can contaminate food and water with pollutants such petroleum-based and bisphenol A (BPA). This is obviously terrible for people's health. They pose a threat to marine life as well. When garbage is dumped into waterways, it causes water pollution, which is harmful to marine life.

Eco-friendly consumer preferences

Soegoto (2018) states that the primary goal of studying eco-friendly consumer preferences is to get insight into customers' likes and dislikes in relation to green products, as well as their familiarity with and enthusiasm for such goods in the present-day marketplace. Products like plastic cutlery, coffee cups, cake wrap, pastry bags, food, electronics, and more are all made with eco-friendliness in mind (Handayani, 2017). At the end of their useful lives, none of these items pose any threat to the natural world. Setting an

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example in everyday actions and ensuring sure the products one buys are environmentally safe are two of the most effective strategies to combat pollution. According to research by Noor and Kumar (2014), consumers value The Intended Consumers may like using the Product but not necessarily favour it. According to Kulshreshtha, Bajpai, Tripathi, and Sharma (2019), consumers' preferences include knowing and liking the goods on sale. Because of the information gained from the communication mix, the consumer has an intuitive grasp of the supplied product and a genuine desire to learn more about it. One of the most essential factors in deciding to buy eco-friendly products is how familiar and appealing that product is to potential buyers, and here is where green marketing (Green Marketing) comes in. According to researchers Lu, Lord, and Yoke (2015), a preference is an attitude that assigns a positive or negative value to a specific thing, idea, or person. According to Hung and Chen (2012), the prototypical preference theory states that an object's prototypicality increases its likelihood of being deemed aesthetically pleasing. There should be some thought given to environmental concerns in product labelling, packaging, usage, and disposal. Social, economic, political, and technological trade-offs are all integral to environmental conservation (Oláh, Kitukutha, Haddad, Pakurár, Máté, & Popp, 2018). Using the brand in a long-term decision alongside other options in the evoked set calls for a preference strategy. When making a long-term decision, it's common to consider multiple brands, a wide range of attributes, and a variety of information sources, so a straightforward capture method might not be enough. An easy-to-implement capture technique may not be sufficient for complex decision-making processes incorporating multiple brands, qualities,

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and information sources (Biswas & Roy, 2015). A thorough search must be conducted for a preferred strategy to be effective, with specific details regarding different product qualities, shopping locations, and so on. The next step is to establish dominance in those marketable characteristics. (Ostasevičiūtė & Šliburytė, 2008). Colour and flavour preferences, for example, show significant regional variations. Marketers who do not consider customer tastes risk failing (Biswas, Labrecque, Lehmann, and Markos, 2014). Liu, Teng, & Han (2020) found that consumers with a high level of environmental awareness were more environmentally conscious than those with a low level of environmental knowledge. To evaluate the hypothesised antecedents, their impact on eco-friendly products' buy intention and behaviour, and the intention-behavior link, this study gives insight into the particular antecedents of purchasing eco-friendly items for green and non-green consumers.

Eco-friendly product Pricing and Consumers' Willingness to Pay for Eco-friendly Products

The "total of all the values that customers give up in order to get the benefits of having or utilising a product or service" is what we call the "price" in the marketing of environmentally friendly goods and services (Ong et al., 2015). Monroe (2012) argues that "price" can also relate to how much a buyer has to part with. According to another definition given by Danes and Lindsey Mullikin (2012), price is the sum of money the buyer must pay the seller to complete the transaction. Jisana (2014) argues that customers' needs in terms of price, quality, and availability matter when making a purchase. If the price is too high, they won't buy it, but if it's too low, the product's availability or

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quality will determine whether they do. As a result, it's reasonable to infer that pricing is a significant factor in consumers' minds when making purchases and serves as the key motive for doing so (Svatosová, 2013).

Price and quality are key factors in the product selection process, according to Landon and Smith (2012). When looking to sell environmentally friendly goods, companies shouldn't use a premium pricing strategy (Svatosová, 2013). The authors Ong, Goh, Goh, Too, and Goh (2015) argue that companies use price as a weapon in the battle for customers and market share. Studies on customers' propensity to pay a premium for environmentally friendly goods have been done in this context. Berger's (2019) research reveals that consumers are willing to pay a premium for some eco-friendly goods. However, Moser (2015) found that price has a negligible role in consumers' final purchasing decisions. The "reaction of an individual to the amount of money sought or paid for a commodity or service" (Dominique-Ferreira, Vasconcelos, & Proença, 2016) is the idea of price sensitivity, and it plays a significant role in consumer decisions. Customers can be broken down into two groups: those who make light to moderate use of a product or service and are thus less price sensitive, and those who make heavy use of it and are thus more price sensitive (Andreyeva, Long, & Brownell, 2010). According to the research of Chen, Choubey, and Singh (2021), consumers who are highly sensitive to price changes will not pay a "price premium" for goods and services. The term "price premium" is used to describe prices that are higher than the "fair" price or the price at which the product's "real" value is reflected (Yang, Solgaard, & Haider, 2015). Although most shoppers look for the best

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value for their dollar, Yue, Sheng, She, and Xu (2020) argue that green customers are especially price-conscious when buying eco-friendly goods.

According to Sata (2013), consumers value affordability most when purchasing. Yuhanis (2004) asserts that only a small percentage of consumers are willing to pay a premium for environmentally friendly products, but numerous studies have found the opposite true. For example, Van Doorn and Verhoef (2011) discovered that 82% of respondents to their survey were willing to pay more for green goods. Many researchers agree with this finding, including Roddy, Steinmiller, and Greenwald (2011) and Yang, Solgaard, and Haider (2015). Others have gone even further in their research by exploring the price point at which consumers are prepared to purchase environmentally friendly goods. Researchers have found that consumers are willing to pay a premium for environmentally friendly products. For example, Saphores, Nixon, Ogunseitan, and Shapiro (2007) found that consumers were willing to pay a 1% premium for environmentally friendly electronics; Drozdenko, Jensen, and Coelho (2011) found that their sample of homeowners were willing to pay a 9.5% premium for a green music player; Milovantseva (2016) states that consumers were willing to pay a 5% premium for According to research by Van Doorn and Verhoef (2011), customers are willing to pay a premium of 5% for environmentally friendly packaging. AschemannWitzel et al. (2011); Gil, Gracia, and Sanchez (2000) all come to similar conclusions (2017). According to previous research, consumers are willing to pay a premium for environmentally friendly goods.

However, this premium varies significantly from product category to product category. It depends on factors such as the perceived benefits and

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functionality of the products and the potential savings that will result from the purchase (Chiu et al., 2014; Rahman & Haque, 2011). According to the findings of a study examined by Connolly and Klaiber (2014), prices for various product types might vary widely. According to Govender and Govender (2016), Green product marketers need to strike a compromise between consumers' price sensitivity and their willingness to pay for environmental safety when determining the pricing of green products. Consumers' perceptions of the presence of "barriers" that obstruct or complicate the process of acquiring green products, as proposed by Barbarossa and Pastore (2015) (costs when purchasing green alternatives; social dilemma theory; negative teleological evaluations; H-V theory). There isn't enough green consumption since ecological brands are hard to come by, have a limited selection, cost more, and are of worse quality, according to research by Gleim, Smith, Andrews, and Cronin Jr. (2013). According to Nittala (2014), it is difficult for customers to recognise eco-friendly goods. Morel and Kwakye (2012) concluded similarly, arguing that many buyers struggle with eco-friendly product labelling.

Empirical Review

This part of the literature review focuses on previous research that has been done on the topic of customers' environmental concerns and how it affects their purchasing of eco-friendly items. This research relied on a review of the previous work of these academics. The works' aims, methods, results, conclusions, and suggestions were all considered. Dubihlela and Ngxukumeshe (2016) surveyed customers of many grocery stores to learn more about their shopping habits. A cross-sectional study with a random

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sample was conducted using a total of 400 questionnaires. Results from Southern Gauteng suggested that indigenous respondents understood environmental sustainability. However, the sample's reliability was inadequate for the intended audience because of the inability to extrapolate from an unequal distribution of responses.

Nonetheless, there was a significant age disparity between the categories of users. In addition, this study did not categorise stores; instead, it concentrated on the effects of customers' eco-friendly habits. For human health, Yüksel and Kiliç (2015) examined the materials used to make various furniture items. The research utilised a robust concept that used sustainable and reusable resources. However, a title such as "Sample Product Design Materials" is inappropriate because the work does not develop a sustainable design strategy but rather merely summarises existing research. This research discovered a novel ecological material for use in future design strategies, even though some of the examples were based on artistic conceptions. MacDonald and She (2018) conducted a systematic evaluation of the literature on the topic of promoting environmentally responsible behaviour in a variety of contexts. Following the completion of the research, eco-design suggestions were made.

In addition, the environmental factors were used to investigate the mental models that led to the adoption of eco-friendly practises. The fields included environmental psychology, sociology, business, and consumer behaviour. Trust, accountability, incentive, cognitive dissonance, choice heuristics, altruism-sacrifice, and complicated decision-making are just some of the core ideas the researchers identified necessary for a successful eco-design. It was argued that environmentally friendly product design might

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benefit greatly from pro-environmental behaviour (PEB). Public policy's impact on engineering design choices cast serious doubt on this idea, as it was ultimately responsible for shaping the professional priorities of most engineers in the United States. The study's recommendations for its chosen design example were also directly validated. Even though some gaps were bridged between the theoretical cognitive notion and its practical application in eco-design, an irrelevant review design approach was utilised instead of a test on designer efficacy. The findings pointed to a different approach to design for influencing people's behaviour. Down the field of experimentation, Vlaeminck, Jiang, and Vranken, (2014) zeroed in on an incentive-compatible framework. The purpose of the research was to determine if learning about how a product affects the environment would lead to changes in how people ate. The research uncovered food product features, in particular a food label that showed the grade of eco-friendliness, using online testing.

It was shown that a label with the slogan "think global, eat local" was 10% more effective in enticing people. In 2012, researchers Raza, Patle, and Arya looked at green computing technology (ICT) for environmentally friendly and sustainable computer systems. It could not be denied that IT reduced the need for labour and money. A strong history of computer hardware using thin-client architecture to promote global benefit led some studies to conclude that the computer industry had a mixed environmental impact. The two green design approaches employed in this research should use recyclable materials, and the maker should keep materials for the sake of the environment. Energy efficiency measures such as using energy stars and recycling electronic components became widespread. The study's overarching

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goal was to find ways to make green computing a more viable option for powering resource-intensive data centres.

The research did not discover a requirement for effective implementation and a paradigm for the long-term sustainability of computing services. Asgharian et al., (2012) looked at how satisfied buyers were with the product's quality and the company's commitment to environmental sustainability. Quantitative techniques were used, and multiple linear regressions were employed for the analysis. For the statistical analysis, we employed the Classical Assumption Test, with the outcome of testing the hypothesis at the 5% significance level. One hundred Bandung city dwellers who frequent contemporary marketplaces were selected at random as participants. When the quality of the environmentally friendly product was boosted, so too was customer happiness, as shown by the results. The results were easier to interpret when there were a larger number of individuals, even when the amount of variability was high.

Moreover, the anticipated current market was confirmed to be the intended target. Singh, Sharma, and Malviya (2011) utilized three fundamental environmentally friendly materials to summarise the future demand for pharmaceutical packaging in terms of their classification, applications, and benefits. To ensure the safety of their product, pharmaceutical companies often turn to biological safeguards. In addition, it was built to withstand physical abuse. Scientists claimed their creation could block out all incoming information, and it was subsequently recognised as a worldwide design trend. However, they are unable to recognise measures that will lessen environmental harm from waste disposal.

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The purchasing patterns of Indian consumers seeking products with eco-friendly labels were the focus of a study by Sharma and Gupta (2013). The study focused on four products—televisions, space heaters, refrigerators, and air conditioners—to examine the impact of eco-friendly labels on customers' purchasing decisions. The information was gathered by means of online questionnaires. An online survey was distributed to a random sample of 108 graduate students, faculty, and working professionals, with a response rate of 4.3%. Factor analysis, paired sample t-test, and ANOVA were the statistical tools the researchers utilised in testing their research hypothesis. The survey findings showed that the eco-friendliness of the products was rated as most essential, with a mean of 4.47.

In comparison to other aspects of the goods, such as design (3.52), size (4.21), price (4.24), and brand, this is substantially higher (3.71). The results indicated that customers place a high mean value on eco-friendliness when purchasing certain products such as air conditioners, room heaters, and refrigerators. Waide, Watson, Attali, Eide, Krivosik, and Schiellerup (2013) found that consumers were prepared to pay a premium for more eco-friendly products, which is consistent with their findings. Consumers, however, placed a higher priority on cost than quality when evaluating computers. The study's authors speculated that this might be due to the high level of complexity of the product (Sharm & Gupta, 2013). Except for differences in age and gender, the study found no consistent consumer reaction to eco-labels.

What's more, customers' views on eco-labels varied greatly across various socioeconomic groups. Consumers have different opinions about quality, intricacy, and authentication. Consumers, such as college-aged men, often

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view eco-labels as a guarantee of eco-friendliness. The survey also found that consumers' views on eco-labeled products varied across three levels of support: low, moderate, and high. Although the use of eco-labels alone cannot ensure a positive purchase intention for an energy-efficient appliance, even for the consumers who are highly supportive of the same, Sharma and Gupta (2013) found that consumers can be educated about environmental issues and encouraged to adopt environmentally friendly practices by having information about the product's environmental impact included on the label. The results here corroborate those of Zainudin et al. (2014). They argue that relying solely on eco-labels to ensure the environment's safety is not a viable option. Stakeholders should instead work to enhance other ways to supplement eco-labels.

The Customers Council of Canada [CCC] (2014) investigated whether Canadian consumers gain from more detailed environmental product labeling. The researchers used a sequential mixed-methods design. We conducted a consumer survey and held focus groups to understand further how consumers comprehend existing eco-labels and what information they may require beyond what is currently available. Finding out what characteristics people look for in an environmentally friendly product was the primary goal of this research. Respondents defined eco-friendly products in two ways: products that are less detrimental to the environment and those that protect the environment. According to the results, "the environment" and "buying price" were the two product qualities given the most consideration by consumers. This contradicts the results of a study by Sharma and Gupta (2013), who found that consumers valued environmental friendliness of products more than cost.

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According to the survey, consumers were shown to have a basic familiarity with eco-labels. Consumers understood the eco-label as a symbol of environmental knowledge, safety, and appropriateness. However, according to CCC (2014), full knowledge of eco-label has not been accomplished since consumers do not realise that eco-label denotes highly environmentally efficient products, and the symbol can be used to select the best environmentally performing product on the market. To receive an eco-label, a product must adhere to strict government regulations on its environmental impact. Despite that, consumers appeared to have completely grasped the eco-label as the majority could explain the label accurately when they were to compare the environmental appropriateness of two products. Regarding whether the eco-label supplied appropriate information, the study discovered that the eco-label would be more valuable if it gave information on environmental safety and showed that the government regulated the label. For example, consumers requested that for washing machines, they want information on washing performance and water consumption (CCC, 2014). (CCC, 2014). The study advised that the eco-label should have information that reveals that it is a government-administered scheme and offer information on energy performance in quantitative terms.

Li et al. (2019) conducted a study in Shanxi, China, an found that locals' propensity to spend money on environmentally friendly goods was significantly correlated with how they felt about the environment. This indicates that consumers were eager to spend money on environmentally friendly goods. Results indicated a favourable relationship between residents' perceived behavioural control and their propensity to spend money on

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environmentally friendly goods. The data also showed that citizens' environmental knowledge and concern were correlated with their tendency to purchase environmentally friendly products. When compared to citizens' norms and attitudes, environmental concern and environmental knowledge had a smaller impact on their willingness to buy. The results indicated a negative link between residents' subjective norms and their propensity to buy environmentally friendly products.

Li et al. (2019) found that residents' propensity to buy environmentally friendly products was significantly influenced by their environmental concern, attitude, environmental knowledge, and perceived behavioural control. Researchers employed a case study approach. The research used extended planned behaviour theory and included variables measuring environmental consciousness and enlightenment. 305 participants were randomly selected from the research site and given questionnaires to fill up. The approach employed by Li et al. was shown to have a few flaws. Specifically, the sampling approach the researchers adopted was not random but rather convenient sampling. Again, even if random sampling was utilised, the randomisation technique was not specified. The title of the study implies that some products are not eco-friendly, but the study does not make it clear to the reader whether it is focusing on those specific products or on household products in general. Finally, Urien and Kilbourne's (2011) study of consumer attitudes regarding recycled paper found the opposite. The idea behind recycling was to lessen negative effects on the environment. In order to get the primary data, the researchers used questionnaires. The findings demonstrated that consumers' norms and attitudes influenced their propensity to buy

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environmentally friendly paper. Printing, writing, recording, and packaging all make use of paper in ways that are favourable to the environment. Although similar to prior research by Barbarossa and De Pelsmacker, this study found nothing new (2016).

Conceptual Framework

The theoretical basis of this research is the Theory of Planned Behaviour. The study's conceptual framework is depicted in Figure 6. The arrows' directions indicate the relationships between the diagram's constituent parts and the processes being represented. Consumers' decision-making for green products is broken down into its component parts, which the framework explains.

The framework centres on the following five factors: environmental concern, consumer knowledge, consumer attitude, pro-environmental behaviour, and final intent to purchase.

It implies that human behaviour can be predicted from an individual's goal of carrying out that behaviour. If you want to buy environmentally friendly products, one of the first things you should do is educate yourself on the problems that matter most to you. The individual's subjective information, such as sustainable purchase and general understanding of eco-labels, kicks off the process of adopting environmentally friendly products. Although some may find it difficult to read and understand, the ecological label is a significant technique of communicating environmental justifications to the consumer because many shoppers always read the labels and believe the information is accurate. It is vital to examine the absence of information on the environmental and social performance of products and producers as a potential

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barrier for buyers of eco-friendly items. Some shoppers, however, might be interested in finding out about the product's environmental impact before deciding whether to purchase an eco-friendly option with lower quality. There is a tendency among some Nordic consumers to place an excessive amount of importance on buying products with eco-labels, even though they are well-informed about and trust eco-labels.

People's attitude is their approval or disapproval of a particular behaviour or object. The ABC-model states that attitudes are made up of three different factors. Effect, behaviour, and thought are the three parts. An individual's affective response to a product is known as their "love" for that thing. Comparatively, in the context of behaviour, an object's worth is determined by how it has acted in the past. Finally, the mental processes of cognition highlight the traits and abilities essential to developing an outlook. Every attitude consists of these three parts, but the method in which they are ordered determines how that attitude manifests itself. Positive or negative emotions are associated with the affective dimension of an attitude. It's also suggested that the value effect be considered when trying to motivate people to change their behaviour. Attitudes can have a cognitive genesis, but in the absence of either information or emotions, people will often go to their past actions toward the thing to determine how they feel about it now.

Environmental worry, consumer awareness, and attitude all have a role in shaping people's pro-environmental behaviour. Positive and negative effects on the natural world can be seen as manifestations of human behaviour. However, as humans continually interact with their surroundings, virtually all actions can be classified as environmental behaviour. Therefore, no matter

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how slight, all human actions would fall under this umbrella phrase. For instance, the act of walking, any human movement, or even the act of breathing. While this big-picture explanation of environmental behaviour is sound from a conceptual standpoint, it serves no practical purpose in interdisciplinary discourse.

The final phase is purchasing intention, which occurs when a consumer really decides to buy a green product. Consumers' propensity or readiness to adopt eco-friendly options can be gauged by looking at their purchase intent. Consumers' environmental worry, knowledge, attitude, and pro-environmental behaviour, all of which are evaluated positively or negatively, impact their intention to take action.

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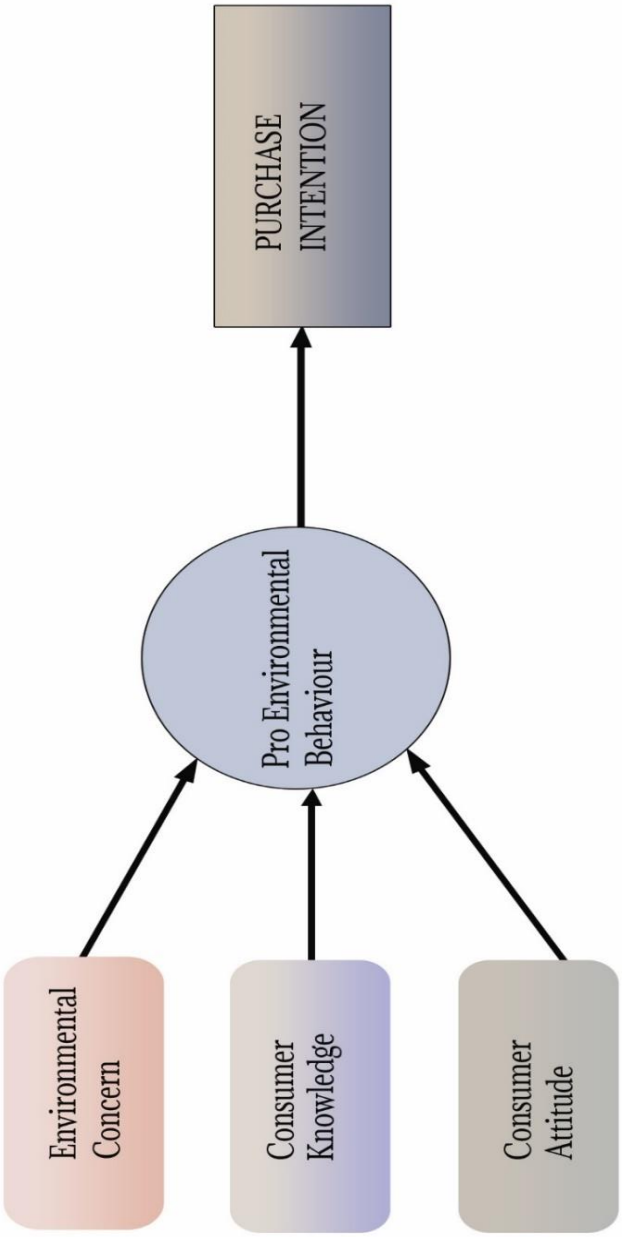

Figure 6: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher's Construct (2022)

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Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed relevant related literature to the study. The chapter began with the theoretical review that underpinned the study. Specifically, the Buying Decision Process: The Five-Stage Model, the Consumer Decision Model, and the Green consumer purchasing model were the theories that were reviewed. These models were helpful in the sense that they helped to understand how consumers make decisions. Also, literature on the concept of eco-friendly Products, green product purchase decisions, environmental concerns, consumer awareness and knowledge about eco-friendly products, product labeling, and environmental hazards were reviewed. The conceptual framework for the study, which was developed based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour, was also discussed in this chapter.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

In this section, focus on the research approach generally taken into account. It describes the research strategy, study location, population of interest, sample size and associated processes, data collection instrument, data collection protocols, data analysis, ethical considerations, and any necessary pilot testing.

Research Design

By using a qualitative method, this study gave the researcher a chance to dig deep into the subject at hand and uncover previously unnoticed facets of the situation. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), the qualitative research technique aids the researcher in selecting the most suitable processes, ranging from high-level to fine-grained approaches to data collecting, analysis, and interpretation. Creswell (2013) defines qualitative research as an approach to empirical inquiry that is based on the study of meaning-making processes. This study adopted a descriptive phenomenological design, which best suited the research question. Padilla-Daz (2015) argues that the descriptive phenomenological design is most suited to conveying the individual's experience and interpretation of events encountered during an investigation. As defined by Elley-Brown (2015), phenomenology is the study of phenomena, which includes everything a person can be aware of. According to Patton (2002), phenomenology studies how people experience, describe, evaluate, remember, interpret, and converse about a thing. Todres and Holloway (2004) offered a similar explanation, stating that phenomenology

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aims to help people explain their experience of a phenomenon by sharing their observations with others and providing answers to issues of meaning. The descriptive phenomenological design helped the researcher to interpret the experience of consumers for an in-depth understanding of how they apply their concerns for the environment in their purchasing of eco-friendly products. In addition, the descriptive phenomenological design assisted the researcher in collecting credible data as participants gave an account of their experiences from their perspective, as postulated by (Patton, 2002). The design helped the researcher explain participants' experiences based on their accounts.

Population

The population of this study is defined as all shoppers (consumers) of the two large retail stores (Shoprite and Game) situated within the Achimota Mall in the Greater Accra Metropolis. However, the target population for the study was shoppers who purchased a product between 22 April and 5 May 2021 at both retail shops (Shoprite and Game). This researcher's decision was based on the fact that the target population is a group of individuals with specific attributes of interest relevant to the study (Bartlett, Kotrlik & Higgins, 2001; Creswell, 2003). The accessible population of this study is defined as shoppers (consumers) who purchased eco-friendly products at the time of data collection. These groups of individuals are considered the accessible population because they may be in a better position to provide the researcher with the needed information concerning the purpose of the study. It is from this group that the researcher obtained a sample of 26 consumers.

Sample and Sampling Procedures

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Non-probability sampling methods, precisely purposive and convenience sampling methods, were employed in the study. Creswell (2013) pointed out that using the non-probability sampling method is most suitable where the researcher aims to provide a detailed (in-depth) understanding of the experiences observed through the participants' eyes. It is a method for obtaining detailed information about a phenomenon described by participants who have experienced it.

Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016) posit that the purposive sampling technique is the willful selection of participants due to the features or qualities the participants possess. The researcher purposively observed and selected consumers who were available at each retail store and purchased a product of interest to the researcher and the purpose of the study. The researcher interviewed 26 consumers from a sample of individuals conveniently available in retail shops at the time of data collection. This decision by the researcher is in line with that of Tongco (2007), who pointed out that the use of purposive sampling means that the researcher determines what needs to be known and sets out to find individuals who can and are prepared to provide the information because of their knowledge or information. As such, the selection of participants for the focus group interview was based on the readiness and willingness of the available consumers to participate in the study.

Data Collection Instrument

The researcher used a self-developed semi-structured interview guide to collect participant data. Dörnyei (2007) notes that researchers often collect qualitative data through interviews. Nevertheless, interviews are more potent in eliciting narrative information than questionnaires (Alshenqeeti, 2014). This

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is because interviews allow researchers to investigate participant's views in greater depth. The researcher deemed a semi-structured interview guide appropriate because the researcher intended to collect in-depth data on participants' opinions, thoughts, experiences, and feelings concerning the topic under study. Moreover, using the interview allowed the researcher to probe responses to ensure consistency.

The interview guide had seven sections to guide the conversation. These sections were:

Section A: Consumer Characteristics

Section B: Consumers Pro-Environmental Concern

Section C: Consumers' Awareness of Eco- Friendly Products

Section D: Consumers Preference to Buy Eco-Friendly Products

Section E: Consumers' Willingness to Pay More For Eco-Friendly Products

Section F: How Consumers' Pro-Environmental Concerns Influence Their Green Buying Behaviour?

Section G: General questions about consumer behavior

The first prompt helped the researcher to establish a good rapport with the interviewee. This ensured productive communication, which led to rich data collection (binti Zakaria & bin Musta'amal). The study's research questions and literature review informed the development of prompts two to five. The prompts ensured consistency across individual participants and groups; therefore, comparisons were made.

An interview guide was used in collecting data during the focus group discussion. The topic guide had four open-ended questions. A typical topic

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guide usually consists of open-ended questions (Gerrish & Lacey, 2010). The topic guide was developed based on the interview data transcribed. This was to clarify and obtain an in-depth understanding of the issues in the face-to-face interview. The checklist helped ensure group consistency (See Appendix C for the focus group discussion guide).

Data Collection Procedure

The fieldwork involved two stages: the first started on 22nd April and continued until 5th May 2021. In this first stage of the data collection, the researcher collected two sets: observational data and second interview data. The researcher collected data sets from the two selected retail stores from Monday to Friday between 9 am and 4 pm for three weeks.

Observation Data Collection Procedure

The researcher first conducted an in-store observation. A less structured observation method was employed. This method was appropriate for this study because it helped collect detailed qualitative descriptions of consumers' behaviour before purchasing a product. The researcher positioned himself at a vantage point to allow for direct observation of shoppers as they examined products to be purchased. The researcher observed shoppers one at a time as soon as a shopper arrived at the retail shop to select a product. A detailed record was made about each product that the customer observed as to whether or not the customer read the label or ignored it before selecting a product to be purchased. This ensured that observer bias was eliminated. A stopwatch was used to monitor the time each shopper spent examining products and the time it was recorded. This is because consumers could not accurately tell how much time they had used to explore the products they

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purchased. Documentation was discarded on customers who left the retail shop without purchasing a product. Also, documentation on institutional consumers was discarded due to the fact that this study focused on individual consumers. The next step of the data collection was the interview, which followed just after the observation data had been collected on a particular shopper.

Interview Data Collection Procedure

The researcher then approached consumers who chose or selected an eco-friendly product to purchase. The purpose of the study was explained to consumers. Those who gave their consent to participate were briefed about the nature of the interview and were asked to sign the participant's consent form which confirmed that they had agreed to be interviewed and recorded. The researcher explained to the participants why it was essential to record the interview and assured each interviewee that the information would be used only for academic purposes. The researcher conducted the face-to-face interview in the retail store afterward. Each interview lasted for about six to ten minutes.

In all, twenty-six (26) consumers were interviewed due to data saturation when no new information or themes emerged from the responses of participants (Speziale, Streubert & Carpenter, 2011). The researcher took the contact numbers of the interviewees. It helped in member checking. That is, the researcher was able to contact interviewees to ensure that the transcribed data was a true reflection of the information they provided. This process helped correct a few pieces of transcribed data. The limitation of this data collection method was that some consumers were not willing to be

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interviewed, citing that they did not have enough time. Likewise, some consumers agreed to be interviewed but did not want to be recorded. This resulted in the abrupt end of some interviews since participants believed that the researcher was taking too much time in writing.

Focus Group Data Collection Procedure

The second stage of the fieldwork employed the focus group discussion approach in collecting participant data. Applying the focus group approach helped the researcher clarify issues that came up during the face-to-face interviews. The focus group approach also allowed flexibility and richness in data collection that would not have been achieved if the researcher had only applied face-to-face interviews. It allowed the spontaneity of interaction among the participants, as postulated by Freitas, Oliveira, Jenkins and Popjoy (1998). The focus group approach offered the researcher the advantage of being flexible, simulative, cumulative, and elaborative, assisting in information recall and producing rich data. Carey and Smith (1994) explained groupthink as a situation where eloquent or outspoken members of a group seem to have control or influence the contribution of other group members.

The second stage of the fieldwork took place at the Achimota Mall on the 30th of March, 2022. The focus group discussion was held at the parking lot at the Achimota Mall. The researcher moderated the group interview. The researcher explained the importance of the exercise to participants and encouraged them to ask every question they wanted to ask and comment on other participant's responses. This allowed participants to agree or disagree with each other so that the researcher had an insight into how the group

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thought about the issue. Also, it helped the researcher collect data on a detailed range of opinions and ideas in addition to the inconsistencies and variations in terms of their experiences. The moderator presented the topics for discussion to the participants and directed the discussion to prevent them from deviating from the purpose. Probes were used to seek clarifications and to facilitate the discussions. The researcher made sure that groupthink was checked. The researcher recorded with a digital audio recorder and took notes in order to obtain a comprehensive and accurate data description. In order to ensure the accuracy of the data collected, it was transcribed verbatim immediately after each discussion section.

A focus group discussion session was held with eight participants. Concerning the number of participants that were involved in the section, the researcher's decision was based on the recommendation that the group should be small enough that everybody has an opportunity to share his perceptions and big enough to provide a diversity of perceptions (Gibbs, 1997; Morgan, 1996; Kamberelis, & Dimitriadis 2005; Stewart, Shamdasani & Rook, 2007). The moderate group size helped the researcher manage the group very well, reducing over-involvement and giving each participant a chance to contribute. The section lasted for 15 minutes. Participants were given twenty Ghana Cedi shopping vouchers each as a token for participating in the study.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability can be defined as the degree of consistency between two measures of the same thing. That is, whether a method used to assess the same concept or thing repeatedly produces the same results over a period of time (Creswell, 2013). On the other hand, validity focuses on the degree to which

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the instrument correctly measures the concept it seeks to measure. The establishment of validity and reliability of qualitative research is based on the trustworthiness of the data collected (Bryman, 2012). Bryman (2012) explained further that, qualitative research is dependable when it precisely represents the experience of the study participants. To check the reliability and validity of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted using customers at the Malcolm retail store in Cape Coast, Ghana.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

The researcher ensured anonymity and confidentiality by assigning individual participants with unique codes. This was done at different stages of the transcription of data. First, individual participants were given a different code. Second, pseudonyms were given to individual participants. The pseudonyms were used during the transcription. Similarly, the transcription process changed the brand name of products and retail shops and information that can be easily identified. This was done to ensure the anonymity of the participants.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out at the Malcom retail store in Cape Coast to refine the research instruments to ensure that it measured what it intended to measure. Also, the pilot study helped test whether items on the research instrument were comprehensible, appropriate, and whether respondents clearly understood items. The pilot study involved ten consumers who were sampled at the Malcom retail store in Cape Coast, Ghana. Data that was collected during the pilot study was treated just as described in the methodology.

Ethical Consideration

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The Institutional Review Board approved the study at the University of Cape Coast to ensure the researcher conducted the study ethically. The researcher also approached individual stores with a cover letter from the Department of Vocational and Technical Education in an effort to gain authorization to conduct customer surveys. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants after a thorough explanation of the purpose of the study. Furthermore, participants were made aware that they might withdraw from the study at any time for any reason, even if they felt their rights were being violated. Participants were promised that their decision to either not participate in the study or to withdraw from it at any time would not be held against them. Participants' identities and confidentiality were preserved, and they were promised that their information would be utilised only for its intended purpose.

Data Processing and Analysis

The goal of qualitative data analysis is to make sense of the perspectives and interpretations of respondents, as well as the resulting patterns, themes, categories, and recurring commonalities (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Qualitative research helps ensure raw data is turned into meaningful conclusions. That is, paring down the amount of raw data obtained, sorting major from insignificant information, spotting noteworthy trends, and establishing a structure for presenting the data's essential findings (Patton, 2002). From data collection to analysis, researchers conducting a phenomenological study must put aside any preconceived notions they may have had about the topic being studied. The researcher conducted in-depth qualitative analyses of the material gleaned from in-person interviews and

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direct observation. The significances were arranged in a logical narrative of interconnected ideas and concepts. The researcher read the transcript several times to become familiar with it and get a feel for its narrative flow.

Chapter Summary

This chapter describes the research methodology. The researcher employed the descriptive phenomenological design to answer the research questions. The study was conducted in the Greater Accra Metropolis, using the purposive sampling method to recruit participants. Data was collected through observation, interviews, and focus group discussions. A descriptive phenomenology data analysis strategy was adopted. The validity and reliability of the results were ensured through checking and bracketing.

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CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

The primary results of the research done in the Greater Accra Metropolis are presented in this chapter. The methodology employed was a qualitative descriptive phenomenological study. Twenty-five buyers were observed and interviewed to acquire the data. The researchers wanted to learn more about how much consumers care about the environment and how that affects their decision to buy green items. The results and recurring themes given in this chapter are based on the questions posed in the introduction. Data analysis was done using Colaizzi's descriptive phenomenology method. The chapter concludes with a brief overview of the most important results.

Participants' Characteristics

The participants were 26 consumers who were all Ghanaians. They consisted of both males and females. Their ages ranged between 22 and 66. The majority of them were between 26 and 40. The participants comprised postgraduates, graduates, university students, SHS graduates, and basic school graduates. Apart from unemployed student participants, the majority of the participants worked as either teachers, nurses, businessmen and women, or traders.

Themes and sub-themes for participants

Five significant themes, with nine sub-themes, were generated to describe consumers' environmental concern and its' influence on purchasing of eco-friendly products. Each theme and sub-theme are represented in Table 1.

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Table 1: Themes and Sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes
Consumers' Awareness of eco- friendly products	
Source of information about eco-products	2.1 Primary group 2.2 Advertisement
Preference for Eco-products	3.1 Biodegradable Nature 3.2 Environmentally friendly 3.3 Reduced cost 3.4 Durability
Consumers wiliness to pay more for eco-products	
Pro-environmental concerns influence on behaviour	5.1 Selection of eco-friendly products 5.2 Not accepting none degradable products 5.3 Plan purchase of products

Source: Field Survey, (2022)

Theme 1: Consumers' Awareness of eco-friendly products

Demonstrating relevant knowledge of environmental issues is one of the most critical steps in making an informed decision about selecting eco-friendly products (Rusyani, Lavuri, & Gunardi, 2021). The subjective knowledge of an individual is required to begin the adoption process of eco-friendly products. The extent of awareness of eco-friendly products was evident as participants described what they knew about them. The following

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illustrations depict how consumers described what they knew about eco-friendly products:

> *"I have heard of them, I know about eco-friendly products I can say I am okay not that I am really really knowledgeable but I can say I have an idea of what eco-friendly products are".* (Patricia, Teacher)

> *"I think they are products that help keep the environment safe, in other words they are products that do not pollute the environment as other products do to the environment as we see now, so many bottles around, plastics bags, all these are destroying the environment gradually but it seems people are not even aware of the dangers it causes".* (Mabel, Nurse)

Two participants also had this to share:

> *"Eco-friendly product describes anything that benefits the environment or minimises the impact on the planet. It can involve using recycled materials, using fewer resources, or outfitting products with eco-friendly packaging".* (Rickey, Businessman)

> *"The term "eco-friendly" refers to any product that has a positive environmental impact or minimises its impact. Recycling materials, conserving natural resources, and incorporating eco-friendly packaging are a few ways to go green".* (Sandra, Trader)

Three consumers said this about what they think eco-friendly products are:

> *"What I think about eco-friendly product is that they are products that instead of destroying the environment, it rather in a way helps the environment like products that can be degraded in such a way that will not affect the environment but can be processed into something good that will benefit the environment".* (Kumi, Teacher)

> *"I think eco-friendly products are products that keep the environment safe more or less products that do not pollute the environment".* (Ella, Administrator)

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Another consumer had this to say:

> *"I know they are products that we are familiar with, that we are used to around us which when we get in touch with, they are not harmful to us"*. (Yaa, security personnel)

Starting the adoption process of eco-friendly products depends on the individual's subjective knowledge or awareness, for example, sustainable purchase and general knowledge about eco-friendly products (Waris & Hameed, 2020). The above study coincides with this current study as the findings revealed that many consumers have heard about and/or know eco-friendly products but are not too familiar with them. Consumers went ahead to explain that eco-friendly products help keep the environment safe and are products that do not pollute the environment. Consumers indicated that they get to see and buy eco-friendly products mainly in the shopping malls and the big shops in the big cities. This finding supports the study by Asioli et al. Varela (2017) stated that the consumer understands and is interested because the product offered is known through the communication mix process.

Again, consumers told the researcher that because they cared about the environment, they were willing to put in some minutes of research into eco-friendly products before they went out to buy them. This is because it would help them become informed consumers. Again, some consumers also stated that they only purchase eco-friendly products when they get into the shop and see the products. This finding confirms the study by Vanhonacker and Verbeke (2014) that consumer preferences consist of awareness and attraction, and the customer responds to the product offered.

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The study also revealed that consumers like eco-friendly products, but they prefer general products because, most of the time, general products look more attractive and appealing than eco-friendly products. This finding is in line with the study on consumer preferences. According to Göçer and Oflaç (2017), the target audience might like the product but not prefer it to other ones.

Theme 2: Source of information about eco-products

The sources of information consumers consider before visiting the mall to purchase an eco-friendly product include primary groups, advertisements, and from the internet.

Primary Group

The influence of consumers' relatives and friends impacted their purchasing decision. Most consumers came to the shop to purchase eco-friendly products based on the information they received from either a friend or a close relative. To illustrate this point, some consumers reported how their friend advised:

> *"I first got to know about eco-friendly product through a friend who introduced me to it"* (Patricia, Teacher).

> *"Actually a friend told me about it, I also read about it on the internet and I got to know eco-friendly products"* (Yaa, Security personnel).

Similarly, some consumers described how their relatives informed them about eco-friendly products. The following illustrates information participants received before the purchase of eco-friendly products.

> *"A family member told me about it sometime ago, and I developed interest in it"* (Liz, Teacher).

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> *"Because I have relatives who always tell me how good and useful eco-friendly products are, I know a lot about them".* (Felicity, Entrepreneur)

Advertisement

The participant's reliance on advertisements was apparent as they referred to the extent to which they provided them with information about the eco-friendly product they wanted to purchase. The participants described themselves as people who depended on advertisements for purchase information. It was evident in the interview that some participants rely primarily on online advertisements, specifically social media, retail stores' web pages, and apps. Some participants demonstrated how they obtained information about eco-friendly products they purchased through advertisements:

> *"I learned about eco-friendly products through an advertisement on TV"* (Mark, Real Estate Agent).

> *"As for me, I saw it in an online advert. It was on a retail shop's web page. I read that the product was easy to discard after it has elapsed its life span, and I think this would help the environment"* (Coffi, Driver).

> *"... it was through an advertisement and so when I came, I looked for the brand I saw in the advertisement on social media ..."* (Asare, Media personnel)

Similarly, a consumers explained:

> *"A lot of information are on the internet. We can get them on tv and radio"*. (Frank, Teacher)
> *"I seek this information through the internet and also I consult people who have used the products before".* (Theo, Accountant)

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Participants reported that during purchasing, they consulted product labels for information about a particular eco-friendly product. The observation data showed that some participants consulted the label before selecting eco-friendly products while others did not read the label before purchase. This was confirmed during the interview as most of the participants relied on their knowledge for information about eco-friendly products.

The study's findings revealed that consumers' information sources in purchasing decisions were in primary group and advertisement. Consumers' sources of information before purchasing eco-friendly products were made up of consumers' social networks and advertisements. This finding confirms the study by Lamb, et al, (2013), which found out that, during the information search stage of the consumer decision-making process, consumers conduct an internal search (recall of past experiences and window-shopping experience.) and external information search (consulting social networks, advertisement search on the variety of products). The study revealed that most participants sought information from individuals within their social network before purchasing eco-friendly products. This finding is consistent with Łatuszyńska and Wawrzyniak (2012) finding that consumers' social network (relatives and friends) is the most effective source of consumer information during the information search stage of the decision-making process.

On the other hand, the study revealed that consumers consulted product labels for information when purchasing. However, Alborzi, Schmitz and Stamminger (2017) reported that online product and label information in eleven European countries was the most important source of information when purchasing eco-friendly products such as washing machines.

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Theme 3: Preference for Eco-products

Consumers had a wide range of motivations for purchasing an environmentally friendly product. After doing their homework, some shoppers choose to forego potentially harmful items in favour of eco-friendly alternatives that, they claim, are better for the planet and their families. Many parents, especially those of young children, worry when they do not know what's in the products they buy for their homes. In recent years, there has been a growing movement among consumers to only purchase environmentally friendly products. In the words of some satisfied customers:

Biodegradable Nature

Some buyers feared that creatures like bacteria and fungi would decompose the product into natural components, carbon dioxide, and water vapour. They emphasised that anything could biodegrade eventually, though it may take hundreds of millions of years. Several consumers elaborated:

> *"… they are biodegradable as in it is easily degradable. When it is dumped, it does not get stuck in the soil like other products. It is also easily converted into something else"* (Patricia, Teacher).

> *"The eco-friendly products that I have used, I think it is more efficient and easy to use than other products. It can easily decompose as well"* (Ella, Administrator).

> *"I always try to buy Voltic mineral water since I got to know that it has reduced its plastic by 7% with new eco-friendly twist bottle for easy recycling"* (Nancy, Student).

Environmentally friendly

Consumers indicated that they purchase eco-friendly products because of their love for the environment. They indicated they wanted to leave a better world for the next generation. This is what they had to say:

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> *"They are not harmful to us and the environment because they are made from nature, which is useful to us and the environment"* (Liz, Teacher).

> *"For me, they help keep the environment in shape"* (Theo, Accountant).

> *"Going green also means cutting down on our carbon footprint. There is nothing more important to us than our surroundings. So we need to look after them well"* (Maxwell, Forestry commission).

Another consumer had this to say:

> *"According to an African proverb, we do not inherit the earth from our forefathers; we borrowed it from our children. This is why we must do everything possible to preserve our environment for future generations. Not just save it, but improve it. Eco-friendly products are unquestionably one of the numerous ways to ensure a better future for our children. They will be extremely appreciative, and we will feel proud that we have left something wonderful for future generations"* (Felicity, Entrepreneur).

Reduced cost

To some consumers, buying eco-friendly products means buying recyclable and reusable products, which tend to reduce the costs they incur. This is what they said:

> *"I prefer to buy eco-friendly products because it saves money. This lies in the fact that eco-friendly products are recyclable which means it can be used more than once so I am sure it will save money and I would say time because I wouldn't have the luxury to always go for shopping but if I get one eco-friendly product I am sure I can use it for months and probably years".* (Yaa, Security personnel)

> *"I buy eco-friendly products because they save me money. This is so as I can use the product several times and for many other use. They also make the environment a better place to live in".* (Mark, Real Estate Agent)

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Durability

The durability of eco-friendly products was part of the reasons that constituted some participants' preference in their purchasing decisions. The durability of an eco-friendly product was considered an important factor to the participants.

Three participants stated that:

> *"They are more durable, reusable, less toxic, consume fewer resources, and are safer for the environment, wildlife, and humans. Additionally, purchasing eco-friendly products helps protect not only the environment and the health and well-being of your loved ones, but also the future of your children"* (Amoako, Businessman).

> *"Eco-friendly products are of good quality because they are made with the intention of reusing them so they are made to withstand these uses or the different uses of the products"* (Eric, Farmer).

> *"The value of the product, as consumers or as conscious consumers we need to take into considerations a lot of qualities of a product before we purchase so I consider the durability, the efficiency, the price and the lifespan of the product. I asked myself how long the product is going to be in use, it doesn't matter the price I just want a product that I can use for a longer period and also a product I can reuse"* (Nii, Traditionalist).

This theme sought to determine consumers' preference for eco-friendly products. The study revealed that consumers preferred buying biodegradable products and products packaged with materials. They explained that buying products that can quickly decompose after use will help the environment in many ways (not littering the environment, choking gutters, and getting stuck in the soil). This finding indicates that consumers prefer to buy products that will not pollute the environment; thus, products that will not end up in gutters

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and drains. This finding validates Gbadeyan and Omolekan's (2015) observation that, aside from global warming, flooding is also an environmental problem caused by using non-eco-friendly packaging materials.

Again, the study revealed that consumers prefer to buy eco-friendly products because they help keep the environment in shape. They explained more by indicating that when the environment is clean, it helps prevent many diseases. This confirms the study by Roy Choudhury (2013), which found that Insect and pest infestation are also caused by improper disposal of plastic containers and packaging. Mosquitoes, worms, and rodents are some of the most common pests that could spawn and breed in waste materials. These pests can bring diseases like leptospirosis and dengue fever to the communities around the infested areas (Roy Choudhury, 2013).

Also, the study revealed that consumers preferred to buy eco-friendly products because it saves them money. They explained by saying that since most eco-friendly products are reusable, they keep the money they would have used to purchase another. This finding aligns with Hartmann and Ibanez's (2006) and Papista and Krystallis's (2012) studies. Eco-friendly products are less harmful to the environment, consume natural resources less, and help save time, money and effort. However, studies by Green and Peloza (2011) and Olson (2013) found that eco-friendly products may be more expensive than standard products because of manufacturing costs. This contradicts the findings of this study that buying eco-friendly products reduces cost.

Again, the study revealed that consumers preferred to buy eco-friendly products because they were durable, reusable, and of good quality. Consumers further explained that because eco-friendly products are designed to be reused,

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they are made with quality materials to withstand different usages. They said that before purchasing an eco-friendly product, they look out for how long it will last. This confirms the study by (Handayani, 2017).

On the contrary, some consumers indicated that though they prefer to buy eco-friendly products, they are of low quality. They went on to explain that because some eco-friendly products are made with used and recycled materials and also made with the idea of easy decomposition after use they are not made quality enough. This confirms the study by (Sadiq, Adil, & Paul, 2021).

Theme 4: Consumers' willingness to pay more for eco-friendly products

Consumers care about sustainability and whether the products they purchase are eco-friendly. However, purchase is one thing; are they willing to put their money where their mouth is? This is what some had to say:

> *"I am willing to pay about 5% more of how much I will spend on general goods"* (Mark, Real Estate Agent).
>
> *"I already pay more for my eco-friendly products purchase so I will say I am willing to pay around 22-37% more"* (Maxwell, Forestry Commission).
>
> *"Something around 20% won't be bad at all"*. (Liz, Teacher)

Also, a participant exemplified:

> *"I understand that eco-product materials are more expensive to grow and manufacture, third-party certifications also add additional costs, and using eco-friendly materials is more expensive than using mass-produced chemicals. With this reason known to me I am willing to pay around 8-11% more for them".* (Felicity, Entrepreneur)

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However, few consumers were of the view that, once they have made up their minds to save and make the environment safe, they should rather pay less. One of such participants said:

> *"I am not willing to pay any extra money. I should rather pay less to save the environment"* (Theo, Accountant).

> *"I am not willing to pay more because I do not think eco-friendly products are as good quality as some general goods on the market"*(Robert, Insurance Broker).

Even though green products are credible goods since their qualitative qualities are generally unobservable, they are being efficiently promoted to allay buyers' fears about the security of these products. This allows for consumer requirements and preferences to be met while affecting the natural world less. Marketers typically charge a premium for such items because of their scarcity and strong demand. According to the results, most buyers are prepared to pay a premium for environmentally friendly goods. It was clear that shoppers would spend an extra 5 percent for an environmentally friendly item. A higher price is acceptable, they said, because of the higher expense of producing environmentally friendly goods.

Again, buyers cited their love of the environment and the desire to preserve it for future generations as the motivation for their readiness to pay a premium for eco-friendly products. Because of this, people are prepared to spend a higher price on the items if necessary. The results of this study agree with those of a previous one by Van Doorn and Verhoef (2011). They found that consumers would spend an extra 5% on eco-friendly boxes. According to Van Doorn and Verhoef (2011), 82% of consumers are willing to pay a premium for environmentally friendly products. Milovantseva (2016) also found that consumers were prepared to pay a premium of 5% for eco-certified

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apples; therefore, these results are consistent with her findings. Once again, the study confirmed that customers are willing to pay a premium of between 8 and 37 percent for environmentally friendly products. It's clear from this research that consumers are prepared to pay a premium for environmentally friendly goods, as suggested by Berger (2019).

Hamzaoui-Essoussi, and Zahaf (2012) discovered that customers are prepared to pay premiums ranging from 8% to 25% for various types of organic food, so these results are consistent with their findings. The research also found that many buyers were unwilling to pay a premium for green goods. They defended their decision to buy environmentally friendly products by arguing that they shouldn't have to pay more for them once they've committed to do so. This supports Yuhanis' (2004) research, which found that few consumers were ready to pay a premium for eco-friendly goods. Although Andreyeva, Long, and Brownell's (2010) research categorises consumers into two groups, with moderate users being less price sensitive and heavy users being more price sensitive, this study undermines that assumption. They went on to say that those customers who are particularly sensitive to prices will adjust their purchasing habits accordingly. According to Andreyeva, Long, and Brownell (2010), high-price-sensitive consumers do not want to pay a "price premium" for goods and services.

Theme 5: Selection of eco-friendly products

During the interviews, consumers described their eco-friendly actions as a personal initiative to mitigate the devastating effects of environmental degradation.

The public elucidated as follows:

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"Knowing the things that will harm the environment, I will consciously select eco-friendly products and I know it will save me some time." (Yaa, Security Personnel)

"…because I have the environment at heart, I try to buy products that will benefit my family and the environment" (Liz, Teacher).

Other consumers had this to say:

"I always try to buy things that are good for the environment and my health" (Theo, Accountant).

"I love to keep the environment clean and healthy so always I try to do things that will keep it as such". (Maxwell, Forestry Commission)

"It always drives me towards making purchases that will favour its existence". (Felicity, Entrepreneur)

In the contrast, some consumers shared their thoughts on how a lot of people are not purchasing eco-friendly products.

"I think because the news or the information is not out there. The information that I have about eco-friendly products, most people do not have. I hardly hear about eco-friendly products on the radio and the television even though I see couple of them in articles and newspapers, but for most of our older folks, they hardly read so if we really want to get to the people, I think television and radio is the best media we can use to get to a larger audience. People are conscious about what they do. They think of the consequences that will come after their actions so if we preach it out there and make people aware they will surely patronize eco-friendly products". (Yaa, Security Personnel)

"Largely it is due to the unavailability of eco-friendly product in our communities. This is because someone who is not that very determined will not pick a car and come here to the shopping mall". (Felicity, Entrepreneur)

"People are hesitant to purchase green products due to concerns about their performance capability. The majority of

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> *people believe they are less effective".* (Maxwell, Forestry Commission)

Also, some consumers blamed the lack of purchase of eco-friendly products on the knowledge of consumers about eco-friendly products. This is what they had to say:

> *"Many people do not know how useful and important eco-friendly products are, so they do not purchase them".* (Liz, Teacher)

> *"Lack of knowledge about eco-friendly products brings lack of interest in purchasing"* (Theo, Accountant).

Not accepting nondegradable products

Consumers pointed out synthetic products like plastic, glass, and batteries as nondegradable. Most consumers stated that because nondegradable products break down quickly, nonbiodegradable waste can cause pollution, block drains, and harm animals if not disposed of properly.

Two participants explained that:

> *"Sometimes when I am buying something, I decide to reject the black polythene bags, and I will just take the product like that, especially when it is one single product or something small that I can hold because I feel like the black polythene bags are very harmful to the environment. I consider the environment when I am making purchases because the more we use those products the more they make the environment unsafe for us".* (Ella, Administrator)

> *"I bought this natural cleaning shampoo because it is natural and does not have a lot of artificial chemicals. Choosing natural, non-toxic cleaning products will also help keep toxins and pollution out of local waterways and water tables, aiding in a healthier environment".* (Yaa, Security Personnel)

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Plan purchase of products

> *"Most of the time my shopping is planned but there are times that it happens spontaneously because it is difficult getting eco-friendly products on the market so if I find something that I know I really need, even though I have not planned for it, I will have to buy it that instant. But most of the time shopping for eco-friendly products, I do plan before I buy".* (Nancy, Student)

> *"Most of the time I plan all my purchases but sometimes when I am unable to get the particular product that I am looking for at the time, anywhere I meet that product I just buy it".* (Liz, Teacher)

> *"Most of the time I plan some of my purchases but I also buy some as I come across them when I need them".* (Maxwell, Forestry Commission)

However, some consumers indicated that their eco-friendly product purchases are not planned. They explained as follows:

> *"I buy them as and when I need them, it does not matter where I meet the product (on the streets or in the shopping mall)"* (Felicity, entrepreneur).

> *"I do not normally plan eco-friendly product purchases because sometimes I may have the money to buy a particular product at a time that if I do not buy the product, I may not have the money to buy again at another time"* (Frank, Unemployed).

The study found that consumers who are aware of the things that hurt the environment are more likely to make deliberate purchases of eco-friendly products to mitigate the negative effects of environmental degradation. The consumers who elaborated further explained that they always choose eco-friendly products because they know what it takes to have a good and clean atmosphere and because they value the environment and their health. This supports the findings of a study by Ha, and Janda (2012), who analysed the

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purchasing habits of 202 consumers of home appliances and other small electronics and discovered a positive correlation between environmental consciousness and subjective norms, which in turn had influenced environmental behaviours. Testa, Iraldo, Vaccari, and Ferrari (2015) analysed data from 1500 British consumers and found that personal knowledge of climate change was connected with higher levels of total green consumption, corroborating the current study's findings. Repeatedly, customers have mentioned that the lack of access to news or information about eco-friendly items is why some customers do not choose eco-friendly products. It was found that people, despite seeing some eco-friendly products in articles and on product labels, are not likely to hear about them on the radio or television. They believe this is not helpful in informing consumers about eco-friendly options, especially those who lack the literacy skills to read product descriptions and news items. Knowledge on the environmental performance of products and labels offering adequate and correct information also appears to be a vital prerequisite, as found by Testa, Iraldo, Vaccari, and Ferrari (2015), to enable ever more educated consumers to make conscious and reasoned decisions. The research found that consumers do not buy environmentally friendly products since they are difficult to find in local stores. Similar results were found in a study by Gleim, Smith, Andrews, and Cronin Jr. (2013), who concluded that consumers are not buying green products because of the brands' high costs, limited selection, and poor quality. Morel and Kwakye (2012) found that a sizable percentage of customers find eco-product labels puzzling, which is consistent with the conclusion that, uninformed people find it hard to interpret environmental labels.

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Non-acceptance of nondegradable products

The study's findings revealed that to help save the environment, consumers indicated that they do not accept products packaged in polyethylene bags. They further explained that these polythene bags are not easily degradable and may choke drains and cause flooding and diseases. Consumers indicated that they resort to buying natural products because they are free from harmful chemicals that may pollute the land, water, or air. This finding confirms the study by He, Chen, Shao, Zhang, and Lü (2019). The study found that petroleum-based and bisphenol A (BPA) in non-eco-friendly packing materials can leach into food and water. The effects on human health are adverse. They pose a threat to marine life as well. When garbage is dumped into waterways, it causes water pollution, which is harmful to marine life.

Purchase of products

The study revealed that consumers mostly plan their eco-friendly product purchases. They explained further that, though they plan their purchases, they buy other eco-friendly products anywhere they come across because they did not get them when needed. Some consumers also indicated that they do not plan their eco-friendly product purchases because of financial restraints. They further explained that, sometimes, they may need the product but do not have the purchasing power at that moment, and so, anytime they get money, they buy the available product. This supports Bandura's (1977) observation that people's actions are heavily influenced by their confidence in their ability to execute a given task. This further corroborates the significance of PBC in behaviour prediction, as stated by and found by Ajzen (1991).

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When considering how this relates to consumers' propensity to buy eco-friendly goods, it may be claimed that those with the most committed and driven attitudes are the most inclined to do so (Barbarossa, & De Pelsmacker, 2016). Again, the study showed that even while they buy eco-friendly products, they need to organise their purchases to ensure that they acquire high-quality items that are good for the environment, their families health, and themselves.

Research by Bashir and Madhavaiah (2015), which found that the intensity of an individual's motivation directly affects the quality of the resulting behavior, is corroborated by these results. Nonetheless, a small percentage of customers reported that they never decided to buy environmentally friendly products. They said that once they have the means to buy the thing and a genuine need for it, they buy it immediately rather than saving up for it.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the researcher explored consumers' environmental concerns and their influence on purchasing eco-friendly products. The findings were supported by the study of other researchers investigating consumers' environmental concern and their impact on purchasing eco-friendly products. The key themes identified were;

1. Consumers' Awareness of eco-friendly products
2. Source of information about eco-products
3. Preference for Eco-products
4. Consumers willingness to pay more for eco-products

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5. Pro-environmental concerns influence behaviour

The findings of this study may lack transferability and generalisation for some other populations in different locations since it was a purely qualitative study using a limited number of respondents.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the study. It presents the key findings and conclusions. It proposes recommendations for improving consumers' environmental concerns and their influence on purchasing eco-friendly products.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to explore consumers' pro-environmental concerns and its influence on purchasing eco-friendly products, their sources

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of information in making eco-friendly choices, their preferences when buying eco-friendly products, whether consumers are willing to pay more for eco-friendly products, and how consumers' pro-environmental concerns influenced their behaviour. The researcher sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is consumers' awareness level of eco-friendly products?
2. What are the sources of information in making eco-friendly choices?
3. Do consumers prefer to buy eco-friendly products?
4. To what extent are consumers willing to pay more for eco-friendly products?
5. How does consumers' pro-environmental concerns influence their behaviour?

In order to provide answers to these research questions, the descriptive phenomenological design of inquiry was used. Data was gathered using observation, face-to-face interviews, and a focus group discussion. The purposive sampling method was used in selecting participants for the study. The sample consisted of 26 consumers. Colaizzi's descriptive phenomenological data analysis process was adopted.

The key findings were:

1. Most consumers have heard about eco-friendly products but are unfamiliar with them. Consumers prefer general products to eco-friendly products because general products look more attractive and appealing than eco-friendly products.
2. Consumers' sources of information in purchasing decisions were in two forms: primary groups and advertisements.

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3. Consumers prefer to buy products that are both biodegradable and packaged with biodegradable materials. Consumers like to buy eco-friendly products because they help keep the environment in shape.
4. Consumers are willing to pay some percentage of the actual price of eco-friendly products. Few consumers were not willing to pay a premium for eco-friendly products.
5. Consumers who know what harms the environment tend to choose eco-friendly products consciously. Eco-friendly products are not readily available in our communities, so consumers do not purchase them.

Conclusions

Most consumers have heard about eco-friendly products but are not too familiar with them, and they prefer to buy both biodegradable products and products packaged with biodegradable materials. Also, consumers' social networks and advertisements are the sources of information consumers utilize most in deciding to purchase eco-friendly products. They prefer to buy products that will not pollute the environment; thus, products that will not end up in gutters and drains. In addition, consumers are willing to pay some percentage of the actual price of eco-friendly products. Hence, most consumers' eco-friendly product purchasing decisions are influenced by their knowledge about the things that harm the environment, making them consciously choose eco-friendly products. However, eco-friendly products are not readily available in our communities, so consumers do not purchase them.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

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1. Manufacturers should ensure that eco-friendly products are of good quality and attractive to draw the attention of many people.
2. Advertisements about eco-friendly products should be very intensive so that eco-friendly products may be known to many people, highlighting how they may help save our environment.
3. Product distributors should make eco-friendly products available at the door steps of the consumer so as to encourage them to make purchase.
4. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Food and Drug Authority (FDA) should formulate strict environmental laws that align with sustainable development principles and environmental pollution control. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) should also review their strategies where necessary and put the agency on a level that will enable it to execute its task as required by law.

Suggestion for Further Research

Even though this study relied solely on qualitative techniques of data collecting, a similar analysis may be conducted with a more robust set of methods in the same or another major city. There is a need for a comparative study into how environmentally conscious consumers differ in their purchase decisions based on whether the buyer is a man or a woman.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CONSUMERS

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

Section A: Consumer Characteristics

1. Gender of consumer
2. Age of consumer
3. Consumer's level of education
4. Product(s) purchased by consumer

Section B Consumers Pro-Environmental Concern

5. How important is the environment to you?
6. What is the first thing which comes to your mind when you think about eco-friendly products?
7. How much difference do you think it would make if you decided to start purchasing for example house cleaners made only from eco-friendly materials?

Section C Consumers' Awareness of Eco- Friendly Products

8. What do you think of when you hear eco-friendly product?
9. How knowledgeable are you about eco-friendly products?
10. How did you know about products that are eco-friendly?
11. How aware are you of eco-friendly products, and do you know where you can purchase them locally?
12. Would you consider putting in 30 extra minutes of research before you go shopping to find eco-friendly products?
    a. How would you prefer to receive this information?

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Section D Consumers Preference to Buy Eco-Friendly Products

13. Why do you prefer to buy eco-friendly products?
14. When did you last purchase eco-friendly product?
15. What do you think the quality of eco-friendly product is as compared to general products?

Section E Consumers' Willingness to Pay More For Eco-Friendly Products

16. How much money do you spend on eco-friendly products?
17. How much do you value buying eco-friendly products over regular products?
    a. If not - would you please elaborate or explain further?
18. How much extra are you willing to pay for eco-friendly products as compared to general goods? *(in percentages)*

Section F How Consumers' Pro-Environmental Concerns Influence Their Green Buying Behaviour?

19. How does the environment influence your when shopping?
20. Is your eco-friendly product purchases spontaneous or are they planned?
    a. Please explain further
21. What comes to mind when you think of eco-friendly products?
    a. Describe the eco-products
22. Why did you purchase this particular product?

General questions about consumer behavior

23. What do you find important when purchasing products?
    a. Do you ever consider the information on the labels?

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24. Do you feel that purchasing an eco-friendly product fulfills any personal needs?
25. Why is it important to save the environment, but generally we do not buy environmentally friendly products?
26. What advice would you give to a company producing eco-friendly products?

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APPENDIX B

OBSERVATIONAL TALLY SHEET FOR CONSUMERS

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

Name of Shop	Date of Visit
Observation/Action Observed	Tally
1. Checks the product out 2. Read label information 3. Do not read label information 4. Checks price tag 5. Shopper talks to another shopper about the product 6. Shopper picks the product 7. Shopper leaves the product	

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APPENDIX C

A GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

This guide was prepared based on the findings of the face-to-face interviews.

1. Why were most people concerned about the environment?
2. The interview data showed that a lot of you did not read the label information. What could be the reason, was time a factor?
3. Why is it that, a lot of consumers have heard about eco-friendly products but do not really know them?
4. I want to understand why many of you said you would not have purchased the product if it was not bio-degradable?

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APPENDIX D

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD SECRETARIAT

TEL: 0558093143 / 0508878309
E-MAIL: irb@ucc.edu.gh
OUR REF: UCC/IRB/A/2016/1151
YOUR REF:
OMB NO: 0990-0279
IORG #: IORG0009096

9TH NOVEMBER 2021

Mr. Elijah Adu Gyamfi
Department of Vocational and Technical Education
University of Cape Coast

Dear Mr. Gyamfi,

ETHICAL CLEARANCE – ID (UCCIRB/CES/2021/66)

The University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board (UCCIRB) has granted Provisional Approval for the implementation of your research titled **Consumers' Environmental Concern and it's Influence on Purchasing of Eco Friendly Product: A Study in the Greater Accra Region.** This approval is valid from 9th November 2021 to 8th November, 2022. You may apply for a renewal subject to submission of all the required documents that will be prescribed by the UCCIRB.

Please note that any modification to the project must be submitted to the UCCIRB for review and approval before its implementation. You are required to submit periodic review of the protocol to the Board and a final full review to the UCCIRB on completion of the research. The UCCIRB may observe or cause to be observed procedures and records of the research during and after implementation.

You are also required to report all serious adverse events related to this study to the UCCIRB within seven days verbally and fourteen days in writing.

Always quote the protocol identification number in all future correspondence with us in relation to this protocol.

Yours faithfully,

Samuel Asiedu Owusu, PhD
UCCIRB Administrator

ADMINISTRATOR
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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APPENDIX E

FINDINGS OF THE PILOT STUDY

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

Information source Prior to purchase

The findings showed on participant sources of information prior to the purchase of eco-friendly product indicates:

"No, I did not read or ask any body" (Ama)

"I read about it online (Nana)

"My brother told me to look for the one with eco written on it…" (Kofi)

Information Source During Purchasing

The participants expressed that:

"I check the price, brand and the eco-label" (Ama)

"I was checking the label, some had eco written on them, others did not" (Nana)

"… I asked a relative for the meaning of the eco and he said it means the product is good for the environment…" (Kofi)

Awareness of eco-friendly products

Participants awareness of eco-friendly products varies. They explained that:

"I do not know much about eco-friendly products …" (Ama)

"I have heard of it but I do not know what it means" (Nana)

"I have no idea about that" (Kofi)

"I know about eco-friendly products" (Esi)

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Consumers willingness to pay more for eco-friendly products

"...I do not have that enough money to pay more than I should for a product". (Ama)

Another participant explained that:

"If you choose to pay more for eco-friendly products and other people do not buy that same product because it is somehow expensive, my one product cannot save the environment alone so I won't buy". (Nana)

"...I would want to pay more to save the environment but not that much" (Kofi)

Reading ability and Reading of Label Content

The finding on reading and ability to read are depicted in the following comments:

"Actually, I did not read but I know that the product is not harmful to both the user and the environment". (Ama)

A participant said;

"I did not read because I do not think I would understand. I can read but I do not think I would understand that is why I asked my brother" (Kofi)

Constituent of Purchased Decision

In participants interview, they expressed what constituted their purchasing decision as follows"

"it is based on the safety to me the user and the environment and the price. That is why I selected this product". (Ama)

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Some other participants said:

"the eco-label made me buy this product because it shows that it is environmentally friendly" (Nana)

"I love to leave a better environment for my children so I choose to buy eco-friendly product for them" (Kofi)

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