

**DETERMINANTS OF SUSTAINABLE PURCHASE  
BEHAVIOUR FOR PENANGITE CONSUMERS: MODERATING  
EFFECT OF CONSUMER SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CnSR)**

**by**

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## **Abstrak**

Walaupun ianya bukan satu perkara yang baru, namun kepentingan alam semulajadi telah kembali menjadi sesuatu yang signifikan berikutan timbulannya isu-isu alam sekitar yang baru. Ini telah membangkitkan perhatian dan mendorong pengguna ke arah pembelian produk mesra alam sebagai langkah untuk mencegah atau sekurang-kurangnya membantu meringankan bebanan tentang isu-isu alam sekitar. Bagi mengkaji tingkah laku pembeli terhadap pembelian produk mesra alam, "Theory of Planned Behaviour" telah digunakan. Selain itu, peranan pengguna dianalisis dari segi tanggungjawab sosial (CnSR) yang dibahagikan kepada kesan sosial dan alam sekitar, sebagai moderator dalam kaitan antara tujuan pembelian dan tingkah-laku pembelian yang mesra alam. Kajian ini dianalisis berdasarkan data yang dikumpulkan daripada 227 penduduk Pulau Pinang bagi mengukur sikap mereka terhadap pembelian mampan, norma subjektif dan kawalan tingkah laku. Data yang dikumpul dianalisis menggunakan struktur persamaan model (Structural Equation Modeling - SEM) melalui PLS (Partial Least Squares). Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa norma subjektif dan kawalan tingkah laku dilihat berkait secara positif dengan tingkah laku pembelian mampan, walaupun hubungan antara sikap dan tingkah-laku pembelian mampan dijumpai tidak signifikan. Di samping itu, dengan tujuan pembelian mampan sebagai pengantara, sikap dan kawalan tingkah laku dilihat berkait secara ketara dengan membeli produk mampan tetapi bukan untuk norma subjektif. Kajian ini turut menunjukkan bahawa CnSR juga tidak mempengaruhi tujuan mampan pembelian dan kelakuan pengguna.

## **Abstract**

Although sustainability is not a new idea, there has been resurgence in the environmental significance of sustainability with recent environmental issues. This has stimulated consumers' attention towards purchasing sustainable products as a step to prevent or at least relieve the burdens of environmental issues. The current study was conducted to examine Theory of Planned Behaviour on sustainable purchase behaviour of consumers. Moreover, it examined the role of consumer social responsibility (CnSR), in terms of social impact and environmental impact, as a moderator in the link between sustainable purchase intention and sustainable purchase behaviour. The study analysed data collected from 227 Penangite consumers by measuring their attitude toward sustainable purchasing, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control. The collected data was analysed Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) through Partial Least Squares. Findings of the study indicate that subjective norm and perceived behavioural control were positively related to sustainable purchase behaviour, while the link between attitude and sustainable purchase behaviour was not found to be significant. Additionally, with sustainable purchase intention as the mediator, both attitude and perceived behavioural control were significantly related to purchasing sustainable product but not subjective norm. The findings also indicate that CnSR did not moderate the link between consumers' sustainable purchase intention and behaviour.

# **CHAPTER 1:**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Chapter Overview**

This chapter provides a background of the study, followed by statement of the problem. It then presents the research objectives and research questions. Additionally, definitions for the key terms used in the study have been provided. Finally, significance of the study from theoretical and practical point of view has been discussed, and the organization of the thesis was explained.

### **1.2 Background of the Study**

Sustainability issues, green purchases and brands, environmental consciousness and social responsibility are on rise and widely argued in emerging economies. Ever since the publication of Brundtland Commission in 1987 and followed by the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and Johannesburg in 2002, one of the foremost issues facing the world has been sustainable development. Governments, consumers, and stakeholders in general are becoming more conscious about and aware of environment-related problems. Various studies has been conducted on consumer's perception and attitude toward environment friendly and green products (Kaiser et al., 1999; Lee, 2008; Paco and Raposo, 2009) and findings indicate that green products are achieving prominence in evolving economies.

Sustainability has three pillars of environmental, social and economic sustainability, and therefore gives a harmonious effect to the society, despite being hard to achieve (Marcus and Fremeth, 2009). Consumers these days are more worried about their shopping state of mind and buys. They are worried about the planet earth they are living in and need to contribute towards its life span and prosperity. For an example, consumers worry with respect to CFC and purchasing non-recyclable products. This is further confirmed with the consumer's upward pattern in willingness to pay more for the earth benevolent products (Laroche et al., 2001). As a result of this, organizations have become more alert on the consumers demands. In any event, if an organization fails to adhere to this requirement, it might face some consequences (Grant, 2008). This pattern towards environment friendly has built up the sustainable purchasing behaviour.

Consumers have begun to realize that their purchasing behaviour can lead to major impacts on the environment. They realize that the worldwide environment is degrading and therefore it is their responsibility to be socially responsible in purchasing environmentally friendly green products. These can influence modern businesses to go green. As such, green products have received increasing acceptance in the market (Raska and Shaw, 2012) and more consumers are engaging themselves in purchasing environmental friendly products (Royne et al., 2011). As such, many organizations are deliberately communicating with their stakeholders on how sustainability has been integrated into their daily business and marketing practices.

The concept of green purchasing started in 1970s with the initiation of Earth Day, which is celebrated as a worldwide event to exhibit the support for

environmental protection and portray public concern over environmental issues. The event has progressively grown over the past three decades, as environmental issues and concerns have increased in the daily life attributed to climate changes in the global environment (Karna et al., 2002).

Based on the study conducted by Hueber (1991) in a Western context, 70% of the surveyed consumers showed full support of environmental protection whereas 49% responded they would avoid purchasing product that was not environmental friendly. As consumers' awareness over environment is steadily increasing, organizations have responded by developing environmentally friendly products (Kohl, 1990). However, based on the observation by Grunert (1993), it was mentioned that only few consumers have expressed their concern over the environmental and this can be seen in their actual purchase behaviour. Sustainable consumers who are worried about the environment issues will express their concern through different behaviours. For an example, before purchase these sustainable consumers will check the products that they planned to purchase to ensure that the products are ethical with an intention that their purchase will improve the environment. Ginsberg and Bloom (2004) found that consumer's behaviour is impacted by their attitude towards the concern over environment protection. Through the purchase of the green products, consumers' attitude is translated into actual behaviour. Ginsberg and Bloom (2004) addressed this type of consumers as "Green consumer". However, Yam and Chan (1998) argued that consumers behaviour and response towards sustainable purchasing behaviour is not consistent. Due to this, in order for a consumer to purchase an environmentally friendly product, he/she must have a strong concern over the environment (Mainieri et al., 1997).

Demographic characteristics were widely used by marketing researchers as the basis to do market segmentation and profiling of green consumers (Jain and Kaur, 2006). Martinsons et al. (1997) and Lee (2008) found that young people and women are the most likely consumers to engage in green consumption. Additionally, people with high income and education level were also found to be highly engaged in green consumption (Straughan and Roberts, 1999). Even though there were numerous studies conducted to prove that demographic factors play an important role in determining the sustainable consumption behaviour, many scholars have also disputed these claims. Diamantopoulos et al. (2003) declared that even though certain consumers have high levels of education, they do not necessarily engage in sustainable purchasing behaviour. They further mentioned that there is no considerable connection between age and sustainable purchase behaviour. To this end, many scholars agreed that values and behavioural variables are more important in establishing sustainable purchase behaviour compared to demographic factors (Straughan and Roberts, 1999; Wagner, 2003; Getzner and Grabner-Krauter, 2004).

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

In today's fast developing and rapidly growing world, especially in the developing countries, increase in daily consumption of products has resulted in scarcity of resources and rise in environmental problems. The current level of resources on planet earth has reached an alarming stage at the current rate of consumption. This will consequently endanger the accessibility of our future generations to these resources and does not allow our planet to replenish rapidly. Due to the waste and emissions of human activities, our valuable natural resources

are drastically depleting and our natural environment can no longer compensate. The world is threatened by various environment issues such as ozone depletion, shortage of drinking water (House and Serrill, 1999); increasing of global warming (Arnst, Reed, Mc Williams, 1999), reclaiming of land, and loss of biodiversity (Pimentel et al., 1997; Richardson, 1998). United National Environment Program (UNEP), mentioned that due to desertification, one quarter of the earth's soil is being threatened (United Nation Chronicle, 2000). Another worrying factor in environmental issue is pollution. According to Malaysia Productivity Corporation 2010, due to the rapid growth of economic activities, especially in developing countries, the pollution factor is also increasing. Some of examples that lead to pollutions are gas diesel vehicles, wastage from manufacturing plants, coal fired plants and untreated sewage (Serrill, 1998).

In the late 1980s, Thomas Malthus raised the issues that there will be unavoidable shortages of food due to increase of demand but in the twentieth-century this was transformed and heightened by environmental academics arguing that apart from the shortage of food, there will be scarcities of natural resources due to increase of demand.

Due to the impact of environmental issues, the natural resources both renewable and non-renewable are depleting faster than could they could be replenished. To cope with the problem of over-consumption, resource scarcity and environmental problems, consumers' mind-sets need to change. Preventive actions and measures must be taken through encouraging sustainable purchasing behaviour among consumers. For example, transportation accounts for a large portion of



petroleum consumption every day. If traditional transportation vehicles are replaced with hybrid ones, the issue of oil scarcity and environmental problems can be addressed. As such, by encouraging consumers to care for the social and environmental consequences of their consumption behaviour, we could strive for saving natural resources and minimize environmental pollutions through using more environmentally friendly products.

Based on an article published by Bernama, highlighted that Penang is lacking of environmental responsibility whereby garbage were thrown out by Penangites without realising the impact of the course of action. In 2008, a survey was conducted via online by global market insight and TNS regarding the eco-friendly habits and behaviours. Based on the results, 8% of Malaysian respondents responded that in order to benefit the environment, they will change their behaviour (Our Green World, 2008). On top of that 83% of Malaysian participant expressed their view that their purchase on sustainable product is influenced by a company who is engaged with the environmental friendly.

According to Luck et al. (2009), consumer attitude have adopted and developed the consciousness of eco-friendly products due to the deterioration of the environment. Due to this consciousness, consumers have engaged themselves to take all the necessary actions and measures to protect environment. This attitude has become their personal attitude towards eco-friendly products (Solomon, 2010). Consumers, in return, support the eco-friendly products and aim to continue to support and contribute towards sustainable environment and sustainable purchase behaviour (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibanez, 2006).

By introducing sustainable purchasing behaviour, the environmental awareness can be raised and enhanced. All consumers of green products show responsibility and gratitude to the earth. This will give a positive effect on the product development by emphasizing on producing more environmentally friendly product. By exercising sustainable purchasing behaviour, individuals can portray themselves as a socially responsible consumer. Sustainability of consumption can be defined as decisions made and actions taken by consumers pertaining consumption issues that improve their and their families' quality of life without compromising the ability of present and future consumers and other lives to flourish on the planet.

Consumer social responsibility (CnSR) is one of the ways that improve and enhance sustainable purchase behaviour. The niche character of CnSR creates concerns for organizations and managers as it conflicts with many of the other demands being faced by their organizations. Increasingly, organizations are finding themselves under pressure to justify their operations and activities – to ever more active shareholders demanding clearer governance and more demanding stakeholder and governmental and non-governmental organizations demanding that the firm honor vaguely understood compacts with society (Devinney 2011). In short, corporations are increasingly expected to be socially pro-active rather than socially reactive. This pressure has implications for the corporation's relationship with its customers and for increasing demands by activists that corporations lead consumers socially and ethically.

Consumer Social Responsibility (CnSR) is a concept that highlights that consumers are accountable for their consumption behaviour and their impact on the

larger social good. It's the conscious and deliberate choice to make certain consumption choices based on personal and moral beliefs and on a willingness to avoid negative external effects the individual's consumption has toward society and the environment.

In order to emphasize sustainable purchase behaviour, an individual need to incorporate the qualities of consumer social responsibility. To be a sustainable purchaser depends on the individual itself. For instance, some animal rights aficionados can go to the extent of not eating meat. Other people are against the mistreatment of animals, but do not have any problem grabbing a hamburger for snacks. This shows inconsistency with the purchasing behaviour of a consumer who is actually claim themselves to be a sustainable purchaser but in reality they are not or they failed to realise or have the sufficient knowledge pertaining consumer social responsibility. There are individuals who are not even aware of their consumer social responsibility.

To preserve planet earth from destroying, sustainable purchase behaviour needs to be cultivated in each and every consumer to awaken their attitude to be an ethical purchaser; “a consumer who takes into account the public consequences of his/her private consumption or who attempts to use his/her purchasing power to bring about social change” (Webster, 1975 p. 188-196).

Previous studies indicate that consumers' attitudes towards environmental issues are influenced by individual characteristics and social factors (Rylander and Allen, 2001), as well as their ethical purchasing intention (Ang et al., 2001; Wang et

al., 2005). Social influences suggest how individuals impact other people's decisions. Park and Ha (2001) pointed out that social influences such as subjective norms play an important role by giving an affirmative outcome on recycling intention and aim to engage in purchasing sustainable and environmentally products (Chan and Lau, 2001; Vermeir and Verbeke, 2006; Yan et al., 2012; Moon and Pelmacker, 2012).

However, earlier studies have only partially examined such factors. The review of literature has identified a major deficiency in previous studies with regard to examining the influences of consumer social responsibility (CnSR) in the relationship of attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control towards sustainable purchasing intention. Therefore, this study will be conducted in Penang, to explore and whether will consumer with consumer social responsibility moderate the sustainable purchase intention towards sustainable purchase behaviour.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

Apart from identifying the consumer's level of purchasing behaviour, this study provides a platform for organizations to identify factors which influence such responsible consumption practices among consumers. This study also includes consumer social responsibility as a moderator which can influence the strength of the relationship from attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control of a consumers toward sustainable purchase intention. In brief, this study seeks to examine a model which investigates the antecedents of sustainable purchase

behaviour, mediated through sustainable purchase intention. Moreover, the moderating role of consumer social responsibility is investigated as outlined above.

The key objectives of this study are listed below:

- To investigate the influence of attitude on sustainable purchase behaviour
- To examine the influence of subjective norms on sustainable purchase behaviour
- To investigate the impact of perceived behavioural control on sustainable purchase behaviour
- To examine the mediating effect of sustainable purchase intention in the relationship between attitude and sustainable purchase behaviour
- To investigate the mediating effect of sustainable purchase intention in the relationship between subjective norms and sustainable purchase behaviour
- To examine the mediating effect of sustainable purchase intention on the relationship between perceived behavioural control and sustainable purchase behaviour
- To investigate whether consumer social responsibility (CnSR) moderates the relationship between sustainable purchase intention and sustainable purchase behaviour

### **1.5 Research Questions**

This study is designed to shed light in our understanding of the factors which influence consumers' sustainable purchase behaviour, while accounting for the consumer social responsibility as a moderator in the relationship between sustainable

purchase intention and sustainable purchase behaviour. To reach the study objectives, the following questions are designed:

1. What is the influence of the attitude towards sustainable purchase behaviour?
2. To what extent does subjective norm influence sustainable purchase behaviour?
3. What is the impact of perceived behavioural control on sustainable purchase behaviour?
4. What is the mediating effect of sustainable purchase intention in the relationship between attitude and sustainable purchase behaviour?
5. Does sustainable purchase intention mediate the relationship between the subjective norms and sustainable purchase behaviour?
6. What is the mediating role of the sustainable purchase intention in the relationship between perceived behavioural control and sustainable purchase behaviour?
7. What is the moderating effect of consumer social responsibility in the link between sustainable purchase intention and sustainable purchase behaviour?

## **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

### ***1.6.1 Sustainable Purchase Behaviour***

Sustainable purchase behaviour refers to the action of purchasing products which are socially and environmentally friendly. According to Meulenberg (2003), sustainable consumption is based on the decision that a consumer makes by taking

into account consumer social responsibility apart from their individual needs and wants. As such, sustainable purchase behaviour refers to the actual purchase of socially and environmentally friendly products.

### ***1.6.2 Sustainable Purchase Intention***

Intention was defined by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) as a person's individual prospect dimension that bonds a particular person to a particular behaviour. As such, sustainable purchase intention refers to an individual's prospect to purchase products which are socially and environmentally friendly. This refers to products that will have positive environmental and social impacts. These products are beneficial to the environment, able to be recycled and meet the social and ecological expectations. Some examples include green cars, recycled products, energy efficient electronics goods, and organic foods.

### ***1.6.3 Attitude***

According to Schwartz (1992), attitudes are sets belief and principles about a particular object or an act in which it may be transformed into intention to perform the act. Whereas Armstrong and Kotler (2009) mentioned that attitude is an individual's satisfaction or dissatisfaction valuation and feelings towards an object or act. This psychological tendency integrally exists in every person in the form of evaluation. An individual will cultivate his/her attitude based on beliefs in the possible outcome (Shook and Bratianu, 2010).

#### ***1.6.4 Subjective Norms***

Subjective norms refer to an individual's perception about a particular behaviour in which the judgment is influenced by other people such as friends, parents, and teachers. Similar to attitude, subjective norms are also influenced by beliefs. Subjective norms are a function of one's belief that is formed by others in one's life (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Hanno and Violette, 1996; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993).

#### ***1.6.5 Perceived Behavioural Control***

According to Ajzen (2005), perceived behavioural control is one's perceived ease or difficulty in executing one particular behaviour, indicating that an individual is in control of the behaviour to perform.

#### ***1.6.6 Consumer Social Responsibility***

Consumer Social Responsibility (CnSR) is defined as making a certain choice of consumption based on the conscious and deliberate choice which focuses on the consumer's personal and moral belief. Harrison et al. (2005) defined CnSR as a concern that an individual has towards the effect of the purchasing choice which not only affects them but also all the external factors surrounding them.



## 1.7 Significance of the Study

Recent developments suggest a growth in consumers' responsiveness and accountability. Based on a global survey conducted by Nielsen, 55% of consumers around the world were willing to pay extra for sustainable and environmental friendly products<sup>1</sup>. This showed a 5% increase compared to the year before that. According to Amy Fenton, Nielsen's global leader of Public Development and Sustainability, organizations need to adjust themselves to be responsible brands in order to win the choice of socially responsible consumers, which appears to be a growing consumer segment. This study is an endeavour to further examine the role played by the antecedents of sustainable purchasing behaviour, while investigating the moderating effect of a new moderator (i.e., consumer social responsibility) in the relationship which has not been tested before in the literature. This study will identify the degree to which CnSR influences the strength of the relationship from attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control towards sustainable purchase intentions of consumers.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.forbes.com/sites/susanadams/2014/06/17/people-want-to-buy-green-in-asia-and-africa-more-than-in-the-u-s-study-shows/](http://www.forbes.com/sites/susanadams/2014/06/17/people-want-to-buy-green-in-asia-and-africa-more-than-in-the-u-s-study-shows/)

### ***1.7.1 Theoretical Contributions***

Consumers are in a decisive position given their considerable purchasing power. Consumers have a great deal of information in hand from different windows, varieties choices and options of products available in the markets that will influence the purchase decision. Usually their purchase decision is either influenced by internal consumer behaviour such as attitude, motivation or perception or influenced by external factors such as family, peer and group influences.

Apart from the above listed factors that will influences a consumers sustainable purchase behaviour, this study has considered the moderating role which could be played by consumer social responsibility (CnSR) which has been recently addressed in the consumerism literature. Even though a number of studies have been conducted to identify the factors that influence the sustainable purchase behaviour, but no studies were found conducted from the perspective of CnSR. According to Devinney et al. (2011) the term CnSR is defined as the cognizant and conscious decision to make a consumption decisions based on personal and moral beliefs. Thus, this study has taken the first step to investigate the degree of influences that CnSR have towards the purchase intention that will lead to sustainable purchase behaviour.

### ***1.7.2 Practical Contributions***

As discussed above in the theoretical contribution, a relatively unexplored variable, (i.e., CnSR) is examined in the current study to measure the degree of influence it has as a moderator in the relationship between sustainable purchase intention and sustainable purchase behaviours.

Consumer plays an important role in the purchasing behaviour. They are the one to decide what products that need to be produced by manufacturer based on their demands. If a consumer is having a high CnSR, definitely he/she will be seeking for a sustainable product. This clearly indicated that the manufacturer needs to do a good business in order to capture and maintain the market. Thus, this will be a big help for the manufacturer to identify the consumer purchase behaviour and pattern and works towards it to produce according to their needs. It will also boost up company's sales and increase its profit margin. This shows that there is a link between the consumer and the manufacturer and this is sufficient to prove that CnSR is important in realization of corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Either than that, via this study, it provides a room for improvement for the government and policy maker to come out with a strategy to create awareness among consumers. This is necessary because based on a study conducted by Wahid et al. (2011) it was found that the practise of sustainable purchase behaviour among Penang consumer is very low although they have shown a satisfactory level in their environment knowledge. Due to this, with this study, there will be significant result

on the consumer social responsibility in which the policy maker can use to create programs and awareness campaign (if necessary) for the consumer.

## **1.8 Organization of the Thesis**

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction of this study. Here, a brief explanation on the background of the study was discussed followed by with problem statement where I have written on the reasons why this research is essential. Finally, I have elaborated the research objectives and questions, significant study and theoretical contribution.

The second chapter includes literature review. It is mostly based on previous studies and research studies conducted by scholars and academicians on the major variables of interest in the current study. This is followed by review of the theory that is relevant to his study and finally construction of theoretical framework and research hypotheses.

Chapter three is mainly about the research methodology. Here, I have discussed on how the research was conducted, what method were used, the population for the survey, sampling frame and sampling method, data collection method, measurement of variables and finally data analysis.

Chapter four is basically on the results and findings of the survey conducted by presenting the data collected to validate the measurement model and test study

hypotheses through the structural model. The final chapter (i.e., chapter five) recaps the study, provides a discussion of the study results, and discusses the study contributions and strengths. It then concludes the study by explaining its limitation and providing direction for future research.

## **1.9 Summary**

Given the alarming levels of resource scarcity, and social and environmental problems arising from poor consumption habits of consumers, sustainable purchase behaviour could be a remedy to this problem. This chapter provided an overview of the problem and introduced several factors which can influence consumers' sustainable purchasing behaviour. Additionally, a major deficiency in the current literature was identified with regards to the role that consumer social responsibility (CnSR) can play in encouraging greater intention and behaviour toward sustainable purchasing. The chapter outlined the research objectives and questions which will be addressed in this research. Finally, the key terminologies used in this study were provided, and the significance of the study was pointed out. The following chapter provides a summary of the literature review and introduces the theoretical framework examined in this research.

## **CHAPTER 2:**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Chapter Overview**

The current chapter discussed and reviewed the related studies on the factors which influence sustainable purchase intention and sustainable purchase behaviour. The structure of this chapter is as the following. First, it will provide the definition and principles of sustainable purchase behaviour. This will be followed by the discussion on the significance of attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, sustainable purchase behaviour, and consumer social responsibility. It will then cover the review of related literature on these variables and lead to proposition of the study framework and hypotheses.

#### **2.2 Overview of Sustainable Purchase Behaviour**

The choices of sustainable purchasers are observed to be the focal subject in the current situation with exploration on sustainable purchase behaviour. The purchase decisions made by the consumers are defined in forms of supporting green companies, purchasing green products (Albayrak et al ., 2013; Schlegelmilch et al., 1996), adopting sustainable consumption practices (Gadenne et al., 2011) and likely to spend more for green products (Essoussi and Linton, 2010).

The purchase behaviour towards eco-friendly products has developed from the general concerns over pollution (Henion and Wilson, 1976) toward concentrating on more definite measures of the likelihood to purchase sustainable products (Bamberg and Moser, 2007; Schwartz, 1994

Eventually, it is the obligation and responsibility of the current generation to preserve the earth by not over consuming the natural resources. The key approach in order to accomplish this purpose is through emphasizing on sustainable purchase behaviour.

## **2.3 Literature Review of Variables**

### ***2.3.1. Sustainable Purchase Behaviour***

The purchasers having a place with the ecological business sector portion are the individuals who are described by their self-fulfilment. These are the purchasers who always have the faith in self-improvement. They are the purchasers who are concerned and attracted to the eco-friendly lifestyle. They will select and reject the products which safeguard the environment and be more aware of the environmental issues.

Since the mid of 1980s, many studies had been conducted in relation to the sustainable purchase behaviour. These studies focus to understand the reasons why consumers purchase the environmentally friendly products, mainly based on Olander and Thøgersen's (1995) attitude-intention-behaviour model as the dominating

approach applied. For example, a study comprising 17000 consumers from 17 countries had been conducted to evaluate the international consumerism sustainability. The study conducted reveal that consumers have a very high concern over the environment and it does impact their daily purchase preference (Akehurst et. al., 2012). Mostafa (2007) mentioned that in recent years, many studies were conducted and proved that that multiple antecedents create the environmentally responsible behaviour. One of the studies conducted by Fryxell and Lo (2003) has shown that “environment knowledge” is the antecedent of environmentally purchase behaviour. However, Hines et al. (1987) presented his argument based on meta-analysis of 128 previous studies that proves environmental knowledge is the most significant antecedent used to predict the sustainable purchasing behaviour. Chan (1999) and Mostafa (2007) also enhanced this by quoting that environmental knowledge can be an excellent predictor in determining the attitude of environmentally concern consumer and their behaviour.

Mostafa (2007) indicated that in order to be a sustainable purchaser or being an environmental friendly buyer, a consumer will consume products that are beneficial to the environment, able to be recycled and also the product must be sensitive towards the ecological issues. Whereas, Mainieri, Barnett, Valdero, Unipan and Oskamp. 1997, precisely define sustainable purchasing is based on the consumer’s perception that the product purchased is actually environmentally benefits or friendly. Same goes to Chan (2001) as he defined that sustainable purchase is a way that consumer expressed their concern over the environment by purchasing eco-friendly products. In order to protect the environment and minimize the negative impact, consumers will act in way to reduce the energy consumption



and waste, protecting the natural resources and also focusing and be conscious over the safety and health.

Many studies on consumer behaviour towards sustainable purchase had been conducted mainly focuses on attitude, intention and behaviour that are incorporates with the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) by Ajzen and Fishbein 1980. This theory has been very useful and supportive in term of environment and behaviour context.

Studies to identify the factors that influence the sustainable purchasing behaviours were conducted by Lee (2008); Chan and Lau (2000) and D'Souza et al (2006a). Based on the study conducted by Lee (2008) for the Hong Kong consumer to identify the sustainable purchasing behaviour, she had used seven variables namely environmental attitude, perceived effectiveness, perceived seriousness of current environment problems, environmental concern, perceived responsibility towards the environment and social influences and concern over the self-image in protecting the environment.

However, Laroche et al., (2001) conducted the study by referring to the variables such as attitude, behaviours, knowledge, demographics and values. In their study, they were able to identify that consumers are willing to pay additional for the eco-friendly products. Their findings were totally different from those obtained by Lee (2008).

D'Souza et al. (2006b) mentioned that they had used six variables to study the multiple factors that will influence the sustainable purchase behaviour. The six variables are concerning rules and regulation of environment, customer's previous purchasing experiences, information of the products available at the labels, products measurement, corporate's perception and finally in term of the price and quality of the green products.

Hines, Hungerford and Tomera (1987) found that there is a significant relationship between intention and behaviour. Moreover, Suchard and Polonski (1991) indicated that consumers expressed anxiety about environment through their behaviours. For an example performing ethical consumptions, leading to purchasing only green merchandises and checking product packaging materials and labels. However, Yam and Chan (1998) mentioned that consumer, who is seen as highly concerned with environment issues do not act steadily. A high level of natural mindfulness and concern about the earth don't unavoidably lead customers to show ecological behaviours. The higher cost of green products and the absence of green products substitutes are the primary purposes behind unfriendly customer purchase behaviour. Follows and Jobber (2000) found that consumer will definitely purchase a product if they believe that the products have significant consequences on the environment. However prior to this, Follows and Jobber (1999) during their observation in the 1970s and 1980s on consumers' environment behaviour, found that previously consumer were more focused on non-consumption behaviour such as energy conversation. This was due to the number of environmentally friendly products that were available in the market. Throughout the years, the studies have shifted to different stages focusing form consumption based behaviour to the more

recent studies concentrating on post-purchase behaviour the consumer behaviour such as recycling.

To support on the recent study that consumers are focusing on post-purchase behaviour, Donnelly, 1995; Dagnoll and Freeman, 1990) mentioned that sustainable consumer will abstain themselves from applying non-biodegradable materials as well as abstain from purchasing a specific brands or products that are classified a products which will pollute the environment.

In support to the above study, McDanial and Rylander, 1993; Mobley, Untch, Painter and Innava, 1995) found that that sustainable consumer are more keen and enthusiastic to buy products that comes in a big and recyclable packages, not necessarily that the packages must be attractive but a package that was redesigned to be a less solid wasting.

Thus, these studies all invoked the paradigm of attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, sustainable purchase intention, and consumer social responsibility in researching of the sustainable purchase behaviour.

### ***2.3.2. Sustainable Purchase Intention***

Numerous amounts of studies and researches were conducted since the beginning of 1970s to determine the consumer's behaviour on environmentally friendly products. Variables such as values, attitudes, demographics, knowledge and