

The Perception of Sunway University Students on Green Products: A Case Study on Students of Department of Communication and Liberal Arts

Azman Ramlie^{*a}, Jacqueline Ting Zi Yee^b

^{a,b} Department of Communication and Liberal Arts, Sunway University, Malaysia
Email of corresponding author: azmanr@sunway.edu.my

Abstract

Since the year of 2000, green products has started to become a trend in the marketplace where increasing numbers of manufacturers has begin to use green attributes to associate with their products. This research is beneficial to companies are creating green products that are targeted towards students as their main target market. This research will help manufacturers to understand the perceptions of students toward green products and can later help them to improvise their products to meet the student demands and preference on green products. The purpose of this study is to understand Sunway University students' perception towards green products. Researcher examined four types of perceptions which are perceived value, perceived risk, perceived price, and perceived quality. Survey questionnaire was distributed to Department of Communication & Liberal Arts students. The data analysis was based on 150 respondents. The findings reveal that perceived value plays the main role in the students' perceptions on green products followed by, perceived value, perceived risk and perceived quality.

Keywords: Green products, perception

1. Introduction

Back in the 1960s, businesses focused on how they could produce more to make a profit instead of focusing on customer's demand and preference.

Green concept was rarely carried out in the business and it is an illusory idea for them to accept (Emery, 2012). Green purchasing refers to the purchase of environmentally friendly products and avoiding products that harm the environment (Chan, 2001). Companies that had profited from developing and selling green and sustainable products have increased over the years (Berger, 2010). Although people has started to buy green products since 1990s, Peattie and Crane (2005) have identified that there is a gap between people's concern and their actual purchasing toward green products. Previous researchers mainly focus on consumers as general and there is no research data that specifically focus on University students. Hence, the objective of this research is to identify Sunway University students' perception towards green products.

Green products

Products that is less damaging to the human health or environment (Martin and Schouten, 2014).

Consumer perceptions

The process of how an individual perceives the products or service through personal experience. For example, interpretive structural model (ISM) can be used to identify the relationship between consumers' perceptions and purchasing behaviors (Nath et al., 2013). The four elements that can influence consumer perception consist of perceived value, perceived price, perceived risk, and perceived quality (Nguyen and Gizaw, 2014). Perceived value defined as the products' value perceived by the consumers based on their personal

experience (Nguyen and Gizaw, 2014). Perceived price refers as the amount of money an individual would spend to obtain the product. Price is one of the factors for consumers to determine whether the products are worth to buy (Thogersen, Jorgensen and Sandager, 2012). Perceived risk is defined as the level of uncertainty of consumers regarding the function or quality of the product they purchased (Nguyen and Gizaw, 2014). Perceived quality refers to an offering's attributes' relative performance generated while producing, experiencing, and evaluating the offering (Golder, Mitra and Moorman, 2012).

Green marketing

A business strategy that marketers use in their marketing activities associates with environmental issues (Alsmadi, 2007). For example, the company not only promotes eco-friendly products, but also using green marketing as a business practice on reducing negative impact on the environment.

2. Methods

In this study, descriptive survey was used to define respondents' information such as their demographic information, personal behaviors or information, and attitudinal information (Leedy and Ormrod, 2013). A stratified random sampling method was used in the survey questionnaire. According to Gilbert (2008), stratified random sample is a probability sampling technique which divides the entire population into different subgroups and randomly selects the sample from each subgroup. The total number of student from Department of Communication & Liberal Arts is 249. 150 students were selected as participants of the research to increase the reliability of the data. The survey questionnaire was designed based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" and open-ended questions. There are two sections in the questionnaire. Section A focuses on the demographic of the respondents why Section B focuses on questions that was developed to reflect the four dimensions (perceived value, perceived price, perceived risk and perceived quality) of perception towards green products.

3. Results and Discussions

According to Table 1, respondents were questioned how they perceived the value of green products. Majority 75.4% of respondents agreed (62.7% agreed and 12.7% strongly agreed) green products are worth to purchase. 16.7% of respondents held neutral opinions with the statement "green products are worth to purchase". Only 8% of respondents disagreed (8% disagreed and 0% strongly disagreed) green products are worth to purchase.

In order to find out the level of risk of consumers when they were in the process of purchasing decision, respondents were questioned how they perceived the risk of green products. From the total respondents who answered the question 42.7% of respondents held neutral opinions with the statement "I do not hesitate to buy green products". 42% of respondents agreed (37.3% agreed and 4.7% strongly agreed) they were not hesitate to buy green products. 15.3% of respondents disagreed (14% disagreed and 1.3% strongly disagreed) to buy green products.

Respondents were questioned how they perceived the price of green products. From the total respondents who answered the question, 50% of respondents held neutral opinions with the statement "I am satisfied with the price I paid for green products.". 39.3% of respondents agreed (36% agreed and 3.3% strongly agreed) they were satisfied with the price they paid for green products. 10.6% of respondents disagreed (9.3% disagreed and 1.3% strongly disagreed) they were satisfied with the price they paid for green products.

Table 1: Students' Perception on Green Products

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Mode
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)		
Perceived Value							
Green products are worth to purchase in comparison to the price I paid	0	12	25	94	19	3.8000	4
Percentage	0%	8%	16.7%	62.7%	12.7%		
Perceived Price							
I am satisfied with the price I paid for green products.	2	14	75	54	5	3.3067	3
Percentage	1.3%	9.3%	50%	36%	3.3%		
Perceived Risk							
I do not hesitate to buy green products.	2	21	64	56	7	3.300	3
Percentage	1.3%	14%	42.7%	37.3%	4.7%		
Perceived Quality							
Green products come with great quality	2	21	64	56	7	3.1333	4
Percentage	2.7%	24%	34%	35.3%	4%		

As shown in the Table 1, 34% of respondents held neutral opinions with the statement "Green products come with great quality". 38% of respondents disagreed (34% disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed) with the same quality between green products and non-green products. 28% of respondents agreed (27.3% agreed and 0.7% strongly agreed) both green products and non-green products have same quality.

Based on the mean value of each of the four dimensions of perspectives, it is clear that the students' emphasis more on perceived value dimension when they develop perception towards green products. This is later followed by perceived price, perceived risk and perceived quality.

4. Conclusion and Future Consideration

Environmental sustainability is one of the important issues that everyone needs to pay attention to. The amount of waste produce nowadays is increasing rapidly and this affects the quality of environment in general. However, with growing awareness among people on the

important of sustainable environment, people are now more concern on the impact of their purchase to the environment.

The purpose of the research is to identify Sunway University students' perception on green products and the factors that influence Sunway University students' purchase decision toward green products. The evidence had shown that students' perceived value is one of the main perceptions that influence them to purchase green products. The result from this study can be used in future to help Green Product producers in creating products that can fulfill future customers' need and wants.

As for recommendations on future research, it would be advisable if the research include relationship between the perception and purchased intention towards green products. In line with this, individual attributes that shape the perception should also be looked into as this will provide further understanding on the way the perceptions are made. A more distinct differentiation also needs to be established between Perceived Quality and Perceived Risk in order to distinguish the differences between the two variables.

5. References

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