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Social responsibility in marketing- exploring the role of perceived value on green apparel purchase behaviour

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1. Introduction

Social responsibility in marketing is trending in customer-driven society as it optimizes its favourable impact on market, company and various stakeholders. As young consumers demonstrate awareness on environmental issues, their green choices, especially in apparel sector - one of the major polluting industries globally, is evident. Hence, this transition in consumer's perceived values has been of interest to the scholar.

1. Objective of the study

a. To identify and analyse the role of critical factors in socially responsible marketing impacting purchase behaviour for green apparel.

b. To develop a framework on green apparel purchase behaviour model incorporating key factor in socially responsible marketing.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Companies are adopting social responsibility in marketing to aid consumers in choosing greener products. Green perceived value emphasises on individuals' environmental expectations (Lin et al.2017) Ecological Value (EV) means values related to environment. Researches indicate that customers who value organic cotton apparel content, have self-identity as environmental responsible individual. Brand Value (BV) stands for functional and emotional characteristics of a product. It needs to be explored by marketers for green product positioning. The value of advertising (VAD) means overall utility of advertising to buyers. Studies have recommended to study advertisement appeals for green apparel product (Cowan and Kinley, 2014). Green apparel variety is recommended to be explored further. Purchase behaviour for green apparel (PBGA) refers to avoidance of purchasing cloth products that are potentially harmful to the planet.

2.1 Hypothesis Development

It has been formulated based on literature review and identified research gaps: H1: The EV is positively associated with PBGA.

H2: The BV is positively associated with PBGA. H3: The VAD is positively associated with PBGA.

Figure No.1 demonstrate initial purchase behaviour framework for green apparel product.

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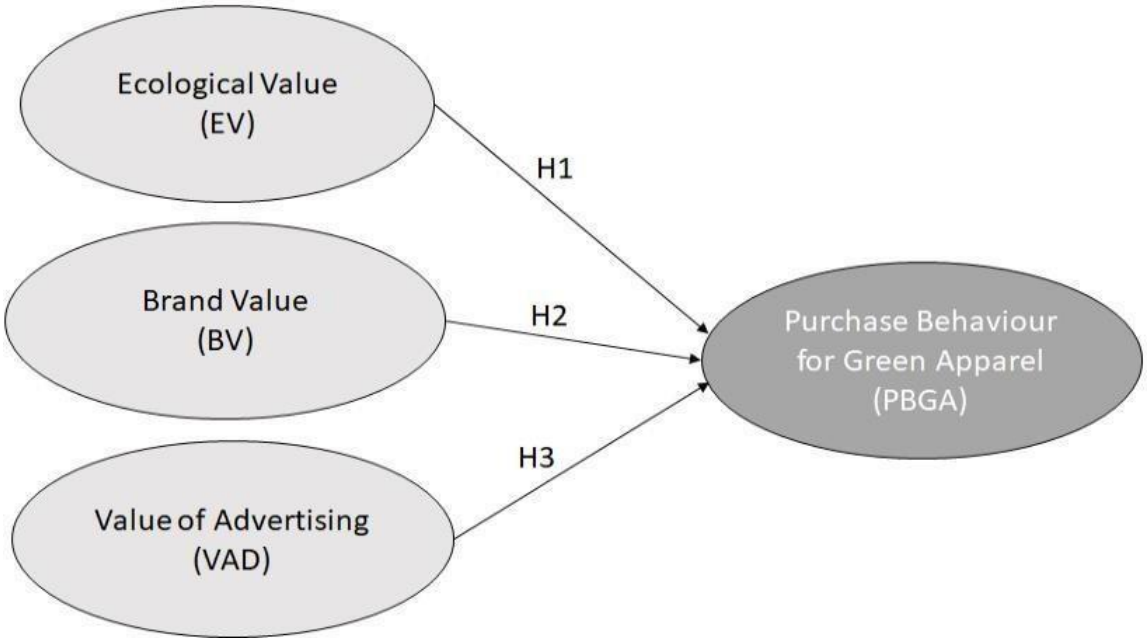

Figure No.1. Conceptual Framework - Self illustration

3. Methodology

Structured questionnaire with Likert scale and convenience sampling was implemented. Pilot study on 20 respondents was carried out. Final study was based on data collected from 275 students.

4. Data Analysis and Results

4.1 Demographic profile

Ratio of male to female respondents was 72:28. Participants were BBA students, age below 23 years with majority having family size of 4 to 7 members. 92 percent were aware on social and environmental impact of apparel product. 98% were knowledgeable on organic product though 68% have heard of organic clothing. Green apparel was purchased for self, mostly annually. Importance was given to eco-friendly and pesticide free aspect of organic clothing. The preferred place of purchase remained shopping malls. Social media was primary source on knowing about organic clothing.

4.2 Reliability Test

The composite reliability for constructs was above expected level of 0.70 (table no.1)

Table No.1 Composite Reliability

Independent variables	**Composite reliability**
EV	0.72
BV	0.80
VAD	0.70
PBGA	0.81

4.3 Validity Test

KMO (Kaiser Meyer Olkin) value for sampling adequacy was significant at 0.68 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity value was significant (p=0.00 and d.f.120). Eigenvalue for the constructs were greater than 1 (table no.2).

Table No.2. Factor identification from Principal Component Factor Analysis

No. of factor	Factor name	Questionnaire Items	Factor loading	Eigen value	Percentage of variance explained	Cronbach's Reliability coefficient
F1	EV	Item 1	0.79	1.13	7.08	0.72
		Item 2	0.76			
		Item 3	0.57			
F3	BV	Item 1	0.78	2.29	14.34	0.80
		Item 2	0.78			
		Item 3	0.66			
F2	VAD	Item 1	0.79	1.74	14.34	0.70
		Item 2	0.77			
		Item 3	0.53			
F4	PBGA	Item 1	0.83	5.11	31.98	0.81
		Item 2	0.79			
		Item 3	0.74			
		Item 4	0.66			
		Item 5	0.60			

4.4 Analysis of Multicollinearity

The Tolerance Value is above 0.1 and the value for Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) remained significant below 5 as per table no. 3.

Table No. 3. Outcome of Multicollinearity analysis

Model	Unstandardized coefficient		Standardized coefficient			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	1.566	0.320		4.89	0.00		
EV	0.189	0.080	0.145	2.358	0.019	0.805	1.242
BV	0.047	0.070	0.048	0.668	0.505	0.585	1.709
VAD	0.333	0.075	0.311	4.462	0.000	0.627	1.594

4.5 Multiple Regression Analysis

H1 and H3 were accepted as p value was significant at 0.000 each whereas H2 was rejected as p value was above 0.05 at 0.505 (table no.4).

Table No.4. Outcome of Multiple Regression Analysis

Hypothesis	Unstandardized Beta Coefficient	t-value	Significant (p)	Hypothesis
H1 = EV → PBGA	0.189	0.668	0.000	Accepted
H2=BVPBGA	0.047	0.668	0.505	Rejected
H3=VAD → PBGA	0.333	4.462	0.000	Accepted

Model fit summary is depicted in table no.5. The equation on multiple regression analysis was formulated as: *PBGA=1.566+0.189 (EV) + 0.333 (VAD).*

Hence, EV has stronger relationship with PBGA compared to association strength of GAD with PBGA. Also, as per table 5, 17.5 % (R Square) of PBGA is explained by EV and GAD together.

Table No.5. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.419[a]	.175	.166	.73653
a. Predictors: (Constant), EV, GAD, BV				

5. Discussion and Implication

Findings indicate ecological value has strongest impact on green apparel purchase behaviour consumers prioritise environment friendly attributes of green products. The respondents demonstrated limited awareness on green apparel hence further information on various aspects of green apparel is required to make brand value for green products which remained insignificant as per outcome of this study. Value of advertising was again strongly associated with purchase behaviour for green apparel as per result, explaining that customer has basic expectation on product being promoted to be green and they look for companies supporting environmental causes. Findings supports how green apparel brings down environmental impact is valuable to consumers.

6. Limitation

Millennial age group, quantitative survey.

7. Original contribution

Highlights the role of ecological and advertising value for green apparel in Indian context

8. References

1. Lin, J., Lobo, A., & Leckie, C. (2017). The role of benefits and transparency in shaping consumers' green perceived value, self-brand connection and brand loyalty. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *35*, 133-141.
2. Cowan, K., & Kinley, T. (2014). Green spirit: consumer empathies for green apparel. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, *38*(5), 493-499.