

Purchase Behavior of Consumers towards Green Products: A Perception Study on College Students of Kolkata and its Surroundings

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ABSTRACT: This paper tries to analyse the purchasing behavior of consumers towards green products particularly the college students' perception in regard to green products in Kolkata and its surroundings. In order to accomplish our objective, we collected responses of 135 students and after going through the data screening process, the final sample size was finalized at 120. The data was collected through a well structured questionnaire using 5 points Likert scale where 1 indicates. We applied cronbach's alpha to test the reliability of the scale and it was found that scaling was reliable. Shapiro-Wilk test for normality was applied where all the constructs are non normal in nature. Further, we applied Mann-Whitney test to examine the dependency of the different constructs on gender, type of institution and locality which shows that all the constructs are independent. Kruskal-Wallis test was applied to judge the significant difference in buying behavior towards green products within the students of different family income categories. There is no significant difference in buying behaviour of students towards green products among different family income groups, but on the context of Environmental knowledge it was found that there is significant difference in buying behaviour of students towards green products among different family income groups. So, we can say that though students are not sensitive to other parameters from different income groups, but they are sensitive to Environmental knowledge while deciding for buying a green product. Different charts have been used to portray the demographic details.

KEY WORDS: Green Products, Perception Study, Cronbach's Alpha, Shapiro-Wilk Test, Mann-Whitney test, Kruskal-Wallis Test

I BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Green product is a product that meets the criteria of possessing qualities that will protect the environment by replacing artificial ingredients with natural ingredients or products that are non toxic, energy and water efficient, harmless to the environment, recyclable and biodegradable. It bears some characteristics like recycle, reuse and biodegradable.

This product range grows without the use of toxic chemicals which comes in eco-friendly packaging. Due to the advent of green product, reduction in carbon footprints and plastic footprints could be witnessed.

Purchase intention of the consumer preferably in the age group can be sorted as "what consumers think they will buy". Behind their purchasing decisions main factors that play a pivotal role are marketing strategies which is commonly known as 4 P's of marketing. New generation consider about all concerned aspects that affect before buying any product whether it is a FMCG or a consumer durable or any luxury one. Green purchasing means purchase of environmental friendly products and avoiding those products that harm the environment (Shamini & Hariharan, 2019).

In recent days green product is not only a need, it is our necessary step towards the environment protection, sustainable development and sense of responsibility towards our mother nature. In all over the globe our livelihood harms the nature to that extent that we now have to take a step forward to solve these issues. Some of the global leaders became more conscious about their product line and take a step to make more eco-friendly products. There are ample number of example in the green product e.g. LG India has recently launched E60 and E90 LED Monitor for Indian market which consumes 40 percent less energy than conventional LED Monitor. They also

hardly use HALOGEN and MERCURY that keep down the use of hazardous material in their product.

INDUSIND Bank, one of the first banks in India to discourage the use of paper for their counterfoils in ATM and sends sms in electronic form. It has contributed a lot towards saving paper and reducing deforestation.

MRF tyres have launched ZSLK series tyres that produces eco-friendly tubeless tyres made from unique silica based rubber and also offers extra fuel efficiency.

ECOMARK Scheme was launched in India by Ministry of Environment & Forest on 21st February 1991. It is now recognized as pre-requisite for sustainable development. Moreover, section 135 of Companies Act, 2013 provides CSR applicability. These initiatives were taken by Government of India in sustaining our environment and also create a path towards profit earning capacity by some local producers by using waste sources.

This study focuses on some specific concern areas like brand consciousness, price, eco-friendly, satisfaction, behaviour, environmental rules and regulations, etc. and these are the considerable main factors of buying pattern of new generation. People of new generation focuses on different value based product and value based purchase even if they are not the active earner of the family but they are deciding member in the family. Above mention focus areas that are considered is the study measures the construction of their mind set that initiate or motivates their purchase decision.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

➤ **Shamini & Hariharan (2019)** in their research paper “Factors affect to consumers green purchasing behavior: A study on Batticaloa district” attempts to identify the major factors affecting consumers green purchasing behaviour in Batticaloa district. A sample taken for this purpose is for 200 consumers. Responses attend through convenience sampling method that are the key influencing factor which influence green purchasing behaviour. Collected data from this survey analyzed with reliability test, and regression analysis. On this study concluded that perception of eco-labelling, willingness to pay, knowledge of green product, eco-literacy are the main reasons to promotion of green purchasing behaviour. It can help policy makers for formulation and implementation of

strategies to encourage green purchasing among the responded consumers.

➤ **Ayub, Naziman & Samat (2018)** in this paper “Factors influencing young consumers’ purchase intention of organic food product” research findings on buying behaviour towards organic food products and its significant relationship between environmental consciousness and social influence and purchase intention of young consumers towards organic food products. Total of 150 questionnaires were designed and distributed at the area of Kerteh, Terengganu. Only 140 questionnaires were returned and in usable. The result of the analysis shows that environmental consciousness is the most significant factor to influence young consumers purchase intention towards organic food product. Health consciousness and social influence on the other hand shown a result as have no significant determined factor that influencing young consumers purchase intention towards organic food products.

➤ **Chaudhary & Bisai (2018)** in their paper “Factors influencing green purchase behaviour of millenials in India” where objective was to study the green buying behaviour of educated millenials in India. This study from Indian context holds special significance due to several reasons. First, India is a fastest growing major economy with a growth rate of 7.6% in 2015-2016 and second largest population base resulting in rapid industrialization and hence environmental degradation results. Second, India is one of the most polluted countries with around 30indian cities figuring in the top 100 most polluted global cities across the world. (Data source: WHO report, May, 2016) Judgement sampling was used by the authors in choosing students as a representative of millennial consumer population in India. The sample consisted of students from various stream of an institute of higher education. Data collected through an online questionnaire survey which offered equal chance to all students to be a part of the study. It was conducted in the month of March, 2017. Total 209 respondents were there from a student population of 1100 i.e, response rate is 19%. In total 202 responses were found suitable for further analysis i.e. effective response rate is 18.4%. After ensuring the validity and reliability of study variables the proposed theoretical model was tested using SEM.

➤ **Nam, Dong & Lee (2017)** in their research paper “Factors influencing consumers’

Purchase intention of green sportswear” examined the intention of consumers purchase intention for green sportswear by investigating the effects of their expectation, perception, subjective norm, perceived behaviour control and attitude of the consumers. The research design was used as empirically test conceptual model, which was expanded from the theory of planned behaviour by adding two other predictors that is expectation and perfection. An online survey was conducted with a nationwide convenience sample of consumers of U.S.A whose age ranges between 18-74 years and a total 542 usable responses were obtained. The results of the comparative model testing indicated significant differences between green and non-green product users in terms of effects of expectation and perceived behaviour control on participants green sportswear purchase intention.

- **Yang, C. Y. (2017)** in his journal “Consumer behaviour towards green products” mainly focuses on cosmetics brand namely American brand Aveda, British brand Body shop etc. to bring environmental consciousness, green consumption trends and thinking green in the minds of the consumer. It also influence brand name and brand awareness. It can be classified into two facets namely brand recall and brand recognition in which brand name in connection with a product type or class of products by consumers and brand recognition is related to how the public can identify the company through visual cues or other attributes-logos, symbol, slogans and packaging under different conditions. In this study the concepts of brand image includes functional component, symbolic component and experiential component. Questions developed were used to measure the effect the country of origin. Moreover; the five dimensions (i.e. reliability, workmanship, quality, dependability and durability) were to measure perceived quality. Finally, purchase intention was measured by using the scale conducted factor analysis. A total of 582 questionnaires were collected, resulting in 568 complete useable responses. Self report scale was used as the research tool to investigate consumers purchasing intentions of green products. In order to avoid common method variance (CMV) this method has adopted ex ante remedy. This study has conducted the approaches by protecting the respondent’s anonymity and employing reverse coded items. In post hoc exam, this study has used Harmon’s single factor test to

check for CMV. This study stated that the perceived quality of green product had a positive influence on consumers purchasing intention. It was similar to the findings of consumers who have adequate brand knowledge.

- **Rajsekaran and Gnanapandithan (2013)** in their paper “A study on green product and innovation for sustainable development” researchers objective is to study the significance of green product, their roles, parameters and to offer suggestion for sustainable development. Base of data collection is secondary and this data collection area is in Coimbatore city in the financial year 2012-2013. Tools used by these researchers are descriptive analysis. It is found that India followed by Germany in the green product using companies and by their usage (Data source: journal of social and development science Institute of social and cultural anthropology, university of oxford). Suggestions by the authors are i) to design environmental product or better alternative. ii) Promote and deliver consumer desired value of environmental product. iii) Broaden mainstream appeal by bundling consumer desired value into environmental products. iv) Educate consumers with marketing messages, which connect environmental attributes with desired consumer values. v) Employ environmental product and consumer benefit claims that are specific and meaningful. vi) Procure product endorsements or eco-certifications from trustworthy third parties and educate consumers about the meaning behind there endorsements and eco-certifications.

III. RESEARCH GAP

After minutely examining the existing research works, following gaps could be identified:

- Practically no work exist on purchasing behaviour of consumers towards green products specifically the students in Kolkata using primary data though there exist works on secondary data
- The sample size in the existing research works are too small and unrealistic in nature
- Application of different statistical tools like scale reliability test, Shapiro-Wilk test, Mann-Whitney test and Kruskal-Wallis test are rarely found

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the buying behaviour of students towards green products on the basis of gender
- To study the buying behaviour of students towards green products on the basis of type of institution
- To study the buying behaviour of students towards green products on the basis of locality
- To study whether there is any significant difference between the buying behaviour of students towards green products among students of different family income categories

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

V. I Type of research

The study is based on primary data and hence is primary in nature. It also bears the characteristics of secondary research through literature survey and identification of research gaps.

V. II Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques

Students pursuing higher education in Kolkata and adjoining areas are the population for the study. A convenient sampling technique has been adopted using well structured questionnaire at 5 point Likert scale and data has been collected through Google form. A total of 135 samples were collected and after going through the data screening procedure the sample size was finalized at 120. Respondents include students from different family income groups.

V. III Tools used

We have applied Cronbach’s alpha for scale reliability and Shapiro-Wilk test for normality test. Further, we applied Mann-Whitney test to examine the dependency of the different constructs on gender, type of institution and locality and Kruskal-Wallis test to judge the significant difference in buying behavior towards green products within the students of different family income categories. Different charts have been used to portray the demographic details. The analysis has been completed using SPSS 20.0

VI. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

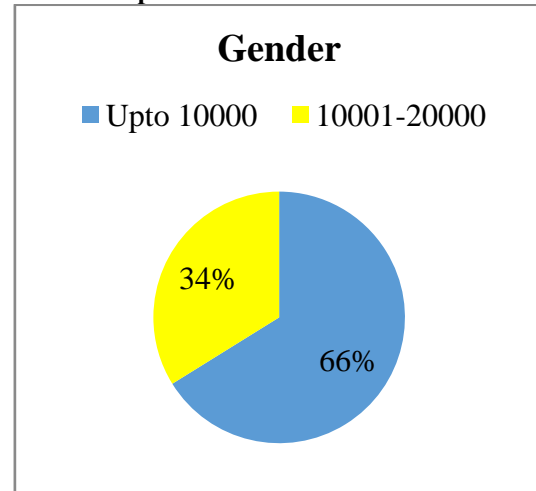
This study looks forward to provide innovative finding to students, researchers, teacher and academician in the context of purchasing behavior of the customers towards green products. This study will enable the customers to take proper and corrective decisions regarding purchase of green products. It will also enable the manufacturing companies or green manufacturers to identify the factors that influence the buying decisions of the customer and produce accordingly.

It will also enable the researcher to gain necessary insight regarding green products that will open up new opportunities towards them for further research. At national level the paper will enable the policy makers to frame necessary policies in regard to green product which is quite relevant when the world is facing stiff challenges from environmental pollution and degradation.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

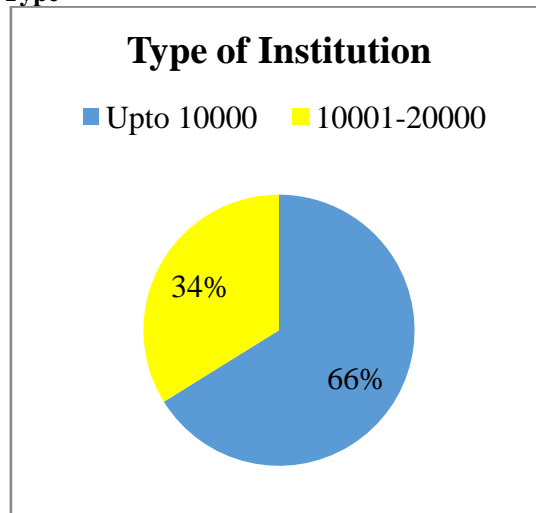
VII. I Demographic Data Analysis

VII. I. I Responses on the basis of Gender



The above pie chart shows the percentage of respondents according to gender in our sample. Out of 120 respondents, 42 percent i.e., 50 are male whereas 58 percent i.e., 70 are female.

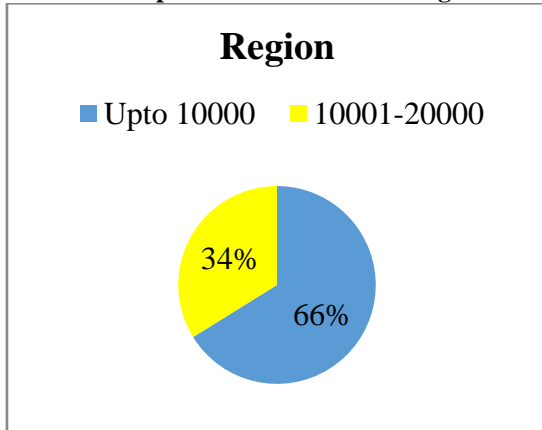
VII. I. II Responses on the basis of Institution Type



The above pie chart shows the percentage of respondents according to type of institution in our sample. Out of 120 respondents, 54 percent i.e.,

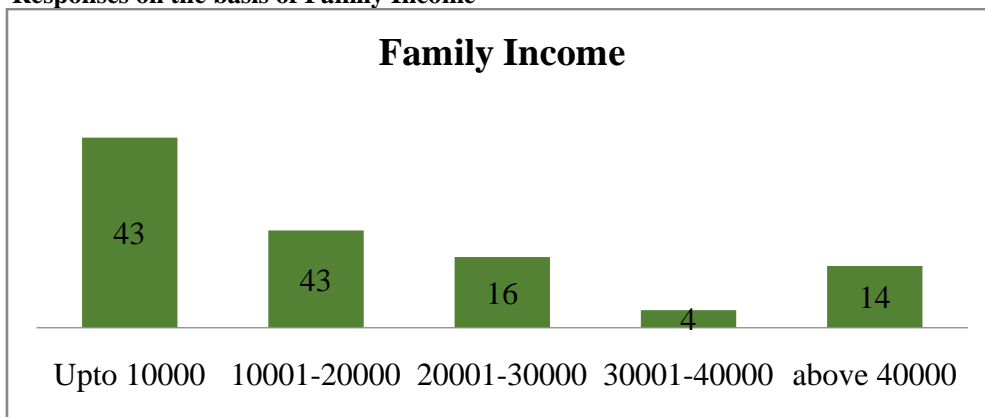
65 are from private institutions whereas 46 percent i.e., 55 are from public institutions.

VII. I. III Responses on the basis of Region



The above pie chart shows the percentage of respondents according to the region in our sample. Out of 120 respondents, 70 percent i.e., 84 are from urban region whereas 30 percent i.e., 36 are from rural region.

VII. I. IV Responses on the basis of Family Income



The above column chart shows the number of respondents according to the family income in our sample. Out of 120 respondents, 35.83 percent i.e., 43 are from income group of upto 10000 and 10001-20000, 13.33 percent i.e., 16 are from income group of 20001-30000, 3.33 percent i.e., 4 are from 30001-40000 and 11.67 percent are from income group of above 40000.

Eco-friendly	0.839	4
Environmental Knowledge	0.847	4
Environmental Rules & Regulations	0.905	4

VII. II Scale Reliability Test

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Brand Consciousness	0.903	4
Availability	0.801	4
Price	0.662	4
Satisfaction	0.749	4
Buying Behaviour	0.77	4

The above table depicts the results of scale reliability test through Cronbach's Alpha. We see that Brand Consciousness has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.903 indicating a 90.3 percent of the variance in scores is reliable. Availability has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.801 indicating a 80.1 percent of the variance in scores is reliable. Similarly, Price has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.662 indicating a 66.2 percent of the variance in scores is reliable. Satisfaction has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.749 indicating a 74.9 percent of the variance in scores is reliable. Buying Behaviour has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.77 indicating a 77 percent of the variance in scores is reliable. Eco-friendly has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.839 indicating a 83.9

percent of the variance in scores is reliable. Environmental Knowledge has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.847 indicating a 84.7 percent of the variance in scores is reliable. Environmental Rules & Regulations has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.905 indicating a 90.5 percent of the variance in scores is reliable.

VII. III Normality Test

Shapiro-Wilk Test				
Constructs	Gender	Statistics	df	Sig.
Brand Consciousness	Male	0.731	50	0
	Female	0.746	70	0
Availability	Male	0.799	50	0
	Female	0.801	70	0
Price	Male	0.801	50	0
	Female	0.804	70	0
Satisfaction	Male	0.758	50	0
	Female	0.797	70	0
Buying Behaviour	Male	0.798	50	0
	Female	0.795	70	0
Eco-Friendly	Male	0.725	50	0
	Female	0.75	70	0
Environmental Knowledge	Male	0.698	50	0
	Female	0.764	70	0
Environmental Rules & Regulations	Male	0.662	50	0
	Female	0.655	70	0

The above table provides us with the results of normality test that is explained by Shapiro-Wilk test considering gender to be the factor. We find that all the constructs are non normal in nature due to p value less than 0.05. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis that the construct variables are not at all normal.

Shapiro-Wilk Test				
Constructs	Institution Type	Statistics	df	Sig.
Brand Consciousness	Government	0.676	55	0
	Private	0.778	65	0
Availability	Government	0.804	55	0
	Private	0.793	65	0
Price	Government	0.806	5	0

	nt		5	
	Private	0.799	65	0
Satisfaction	Government	0.788	55	0
	Private	0.797	65	0
Buying Behaviour	Government	0.788	55	0
	Private	0.801	65	0
Eco-Friendly	Government	0.714	55	0
	Private	0.757	65	0
Environmental Knowledge	Government	0.714	55	0
	Private	0.761	65	0
Environmental Rules & Regulations	Government	0.637	55	0
	Private	0.675	65	0

The above table provides us with the results of normality test that is explained by Shapiro-Wilk test considering institution type to be the factor. We find that all the constructs are non normal in nature due to p value less than 0.05. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis that the construct variables are not at all normal.

Shapiro-Wilk Test				
Constructs	Locality	Statistics	df	Sig.
Brand Consciousness	Rural	0.748	36	0
	Urban	0.732	84	0
Availability	Rural	0.62	36	0
	Urban	0.673	84	0
Price	Rural	0.807	36	0
	Urban	0.79	84	0
Satisfaction	Rural	0.789	36	0
	Urban	0.792	84	0
Buying Behaviour	Rural	0.797	36	0
	Urban	0.797	84	0
Eco-Friendly	Rural	0.73	36	0
	Urban	0.744	84	0

Environmental Knowledge	Rural	0.732	36	0
	Urban	0.745	84	0
Environmental Rules & Regulations	Rural	0.62	36	0
	Urban	0.673	84	0

The above table provides us with the results of normality test that is explained by Shapiro-Wilk test considering locality to be the factor. We find that all the constructs are non normal in nature due to p value less than 0.05. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis that the construct variables are not at all normal.

Shapiro-Wilk Test				
Constructs	Family Income	Statistics	df	Sig.
Brand Consciousness	0-10000	0.683	43	0
	10001-20000	0.742	43	0
	20001-30000	0.796	16	0
	30001-40000	0.729	4	0
	40001-50000	0.767	14	0
Availability	0-10000	0.807	43	0
	10001-20000	0.796	43	0
	20001-30000	0.809	16	0
	30001-40000	0.63	4	0
	40001-50000	0.639	14	0
Price	0-10000	0.81	43	0
	10001-20000	0.772	43	0
	20001-30000	0.812	16	0
	30001-40000	0.63	4	0
	40001-50000	0.779	14	0
Satisfaction	0-10000	0.753	43	0
	10001-20000	0.768	43	0
	20001-30000	0.808	16	0

	30001-40000	0.729	4	0
	40001-50000	0.769	14	0
Buying Behaviour	0-10000	0.77	43	0
	10001-20000	0.804	43	0
	20001-30000	0.807	16	0
	30001-40000	0.63	4	0
	40001-50000	0.616	14	0
Eco-Friendly	0-10000	0.712	43	0
	10001-20000	0.783	43	0
	20001-30000	0.732	16	0
	30001-40000	0	4	0
	40001-50000	0.576	14	0
Environmental Knowledge	0-10000	0.775	43	0
	10001-20000	0.742	43	0
	20001-30000	0.788	16	0
	30001-40000	0	4	0
	40001-50000	0.516	14	0
Environmental Rules & Regulations	0-10000	0.683	43	0
	10001-20000	0.676	43	0
	20001-30000	0.631	16	0
	30001-40000	0.63	4	0
	40001-50000	0.516	14	0

The above table provides us with the results of normality test that is explained by Shapiro-Wilk test considering family income to be the factor. We find that all the constructs are non normal in nature due to p value less than 0.05. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis that the construct variables are not at all normal.

VII. IV Hypothesis Testing

Following hypothesis in the study has been addressed:

1. $H_0 =$ There is no interdependency between buying behaviour of students towards green products and gender
2. $H_0 =$ There is no interdependency between buying behaviour of students towards green products and type of institution
3. $H_0 =$ There is no interdependency between buying behaviour of students towards green products and locality
4. $H_0 =$ There is no significant difference in buying behaviour of students towards green products among different family income groups

Mann-Whitney Test								
Constructs	Brand Consciousness	Availability	Price	Satisfaction	Buying Behaviour	Eco-Friendly	Environmental Knowledge	Environmental Rules & Regulations
Mann-Whitney U	1719.500	1719.000	1689.000	1470.5	1705.000	1680.000	1602.000	1699
Z	-.178	-.179	-.358	-1.612	-.258	-.412	-.872	-0.321
p value	.858	.858	.720	.107	.797	.681	.383	0.748

The above table depicts the result of Mann-Whitney (U) test. This test indicates whether the two groups are interdependent or not. P values of the test are more than 0.05 indicating acceptance

of null hypothesis and rejection of alternate hypothesis. Hence, we accept the null hypothesis of 1 and conclude that buying behaviour of students towards green products is independent of gender.

Mann-Whitney Test								
	Brand Consciousness	Availability	Price	Satisfaction	Buying Behaviour	Eco-Friendly	Environmental Knowledge	Environmental Rules & Regulations
Mann-Whitney U	1549.000	1700.500	1732.500	1706.500	1695.500	1598.500	1621.500	1733.500
Z	-1.381	-.497	-.319	-.462	-.521	-1.100	-.967	-.336
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.167	.619	.749	.644	.602	.271	.333	.737

The above table depicts the result of Mann-Whitney (U) test. This test indicates whether the two groups are interdependent or not. P values of the test are more than 0.05 indicating acceptance of null hypothesis and rejection of alternate

hypothesis. Hence, we accept the null hypothesis of 2 and conclude that buying behaviour of students towards green products is independent of type of institution.

Mann-Whitney Test								
	Brand Consciousness	Price	Eco-Friendly	Satisfaction	Buying Behaviour	Environmental Knowledge	Availability	Environmental Rules & Regulations
Mann-Whitney U	1331.500	1425.000	1456.000	1508.500	1495.000	1444.000	1410.000	1426.500
Z	-1.136	-.549	-.354	-.022	-.105	-.431	-.634	-.579
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.256	.583	.723	.983	.917	.667	.526	.562

The above table depicts the result of Mann-Whitney (U) test. This test indicates whether the two groups are interdependent or not. P values

of the test are more than 0.05 indicating acceptance of null hypothesis and rejection of alternate hypothesis. Hence, we accept the null hypothesis of

3 and conclude that buying behaviour of students towards green products is independent of locality.

Kruskal Wallis Test								
	Brand Consciousness	Price	Eco- Friendly	Satisfaction	Buying Behaviour	Environmental Knowledge	Availability	Environmental Rules & Regulations
Chi-Square	4.111	4.922	7.256	1.403	3.604	9.795	8.826	2.820
df	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.391	.295	.123	.844	.462	.044	.066	.588

The above table depicts the result of Kruskal-Wallis test. This test indicates whether there is any significant difference or not among more than two groups. P values of the test are more than 0.05 excepting environmental knowledge indicating acceptance of null hypothesis and rejection of alternate hypothesis. Hence, we accept the null hypothesis of 4 excepting environmental knowledge and conclude that there is no significant difference in buying behaviour of students towards green products among different family income groups though a p value of less than 0.05 for Environmental knowledge indicates that there is significant difference in buying behaviour of students towards green products among different family income group from the viewpoint of environmental knowledge.

VIII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Sample size is limited to a certain extent and a larger sample could provide a better result
- Different other dimension of purchasing behaviour of green products has not been included
- The sentiments of the customers could be measured on the basis of the questionnaire design and not beyond it
- The study is limited to Kolkata and adjoining areas only
- Different other economic factors at individual level that affect the decision of the customers has not been considered

IX. FURTHER SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- Considering a greater sample size
- Different other dimensions can be included
- The study can be extended to other districts of west Bengal and at national level
- Application of other statistical tools
- The study can be conducted based on income criteria as a whole

X. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study indicates Brand Consciousness, Availability, Price, Satisfaction, Buying Behaviour, Eco-Friendly, Environmental Knowledge and

Environmental Rules & Regulations are the factors that can be the key parameters for an individual to decide their buying of green products. We find that buying behaviour of students towards green products do not depend on gender, type of institute and locality in Kolkata and surrounding areas. Further, it is also noted that though there is no significant difference in buying behaviour of students towards green products among different family income groups, but on the context of Environmental knowledge it is found that there is significant difference in buying behaviour of students towards green products among different family income groups. So, we can say that though students are not sensitive to other parameters from different income groups, but they are sensitive to Environmental knowledge while deciding for buying a green product.

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