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### Analyzing Marketing Strategies and its impact on Consumer's Purchase Intentions and Purchase Behavior of Green Products

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**Abstract:** *Purpose* – Companies have tried their best to maintain their profitability by managing their limited resources in such a way so as to be able to have a sustained and progressive growth. This growth needs an impetus by showing their concern towards the environment and the world is now looking at Asian markets with great hope, and India has reacted positively to it. The purpose of the study is to build a comprehensive model and examine the relationship on marketing promotions [MP] acting as mediating variable between environment justification [EJ] and environment consequences [EC], which in turn have a major influence on environment protection motives [EPM], and consumer purchase [CP]

*Design/methodology/approach* – Formulated hypothesis were tested by sample based methods, using 42-item questionnaire and snowball sampling method. A sample size of 284 Indian respondents in Uttarakhand was analysed using exploratory factor analysis and Confirmatory factor analysis. Structure equation modelling was also used to test the proposed hypothesis.

*Findings* – After going through a lot of literature review it was decided to check the impact of marketing strategies on consumer's Intension and purchase behaviour of consumers towards green products. This finding were consistent to those of Follows and Jobber (2000), who tested positive that consumers who understand environmental consequences of their consumption patterns have environmentally responsible purchase intention. Also the finding is consistent to those of Lee (2009), who also tested positive that consumers who understand significant role of individual actions in making a difference in environmental quality have environmentally responsible purchase intention. D'Souza *et al.* (2006) and Kim and Chung (2011) established positive influence of consumers' experience with green products on environmentally friendly purchase behaviour. In addition Laroche *et al.* (2002) found the two positively related It clearly shows that consumers only purchase products manufactured from those companies who have concern for the environment and tend to castigate those companies who do not. This also indicated that individuals who want to be associated with environmentally friendly society and also contribute towards developing and maintaining environmental friendly standard of

living are more inclined towards purchasing green products **Lee (2009), Oliver and Lee (2010) and Ozaki and Sevastyanova (2011)**

*Research limitations/implications* – Implications would be particularly useful for marketing professionals in devising effective green marketing strategies by providing valuable insight to know the drivers that are able to motivate the change behaviour of the consumer in making their green product purchases. It would also help marketers prioritize their resources.

*Originality/value* – This research provides valuable insights into green consumer behaviour in Indian context by examining the factors that influence their purchase decisions towards green products.

*Keywords* – Consumer behaviour, Green issues, Green product, Agility.

*Paper type* – Research paper

## INTRODUCTION

A green product is defined as “a product that was manufactured using toxic-free ingredients and environmentally-friendly procedures, and which is certified as such by a recognized organization” (Gurau and Ranchhod, 2005). Since the knowledge of the consumer market and the variables motivating green purchase behaviour are found to have important implications (Mederios and Riberio, 2013), researchers have been attempting to understand the nature of green consumers in different markets. The way green consumerism is found gradually moving to Asian regions (Lee, 2008, 2009; Gurau and Ranchhod, 2005; Yam-Tang and Chan 1998), India is found to be a potential market of green products (Singh 2004, 2013). The studies in Indian context, so far, have focused on consumer attitude towards green practices in lodging industry (Manaktola and Jauhari, 2007) and determinants of consumer food choices and purchase behaviour for products such as genetically modified food and organic food (Anand, 2011; Chakrabarti, 2010; Knight and Paradkar, 2008). Findings of the studies reveal that Indian consumers prioritize products and services from environmentally friendly companies (Nath *et al*, 2012; Knight and Paradkar, 2008), and are becoming choosy in their purchase behaviour in terms of preference for green products, product quality, their competitive prices and their accountability in the retail stores (Singh *et al*, 2012; Manaktola and Jauhari, 2007).

Sheth *et al*, 2011, argued that one increasingly common view is to use a customer-centric approach to achieve sustainability by firms that desire to promote environmentally friendly practices or “going green” to current and potential customers. Companies can utilize the idea of green marketing to generate and to facilitate any exchange intended to satisfy customers’ environmental needs or wants (Cronin *et al*, 2011; Pickett-Baker and Ozaki, 2008; Raska and Shaw, 2012). Lubin and Esty 2010, emphasized that sustainability is an “emerging megatrend”. Sustainability is a wider conception of interlocking environmental, social and economic spheres that development should be harmonious but is hard to achieve (Marcus and Fremeth, 2009). As green products have gained popularity in the market (Raska and Shaw, 2012), and in turn, more consumers prefer to purchase environmentally friendly products (Royne *et al*, 2011).

Researchers have made several contributions related to green marketing issues, for example: to investigate consumers’ green attitudes and behaviours; to identify the market for green markets; to stratify the green market into different segments based on the consumers’ needs; to develop green positioning strategies; and to formulate a green marketing mix program Although the issues of green brand appear to

be important, there is little research in terms of green brand, for example, Walters (2006), described the concept of green brand. In addition, Rios *et al.* (2006) found the presence of a positive influence of environmental associations on brand attitude. The purpose of the current study is to develop a comprehensive model and explore the relations among EPM, EJ, EC, CP, MP, and PB. Therefore, this study integrates green issues, green protection motives and purchase behaviour.

## GREEN PRODUCT PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR

Businesses need to constantly assess the latest and most attractive marketing trends. Marketing trends can be found out by continually researching about the changes in consumer behavior in the marketplace. Intentions capture the motivational factors that influence green purchase behaviour of consumers (Ramayah, Lee, and Mohamad, 2010). Green purchase behaviour represents a complex form of ethical decision-making behaviour and is considered a type of socially responsible behaviour. As a socially responsible consumer, the green consumer “takes into account the public consequences of his or her private consumption and attempts to use his or her purchasing power to bring about social change” (Moisander, 2007). A green product is one which satisfies consumers’ needs without damaging the environment and contributes towards a more sustainable world (Shamdasami, Chon-Lin and Richmond, 1993). Purchase decisions of green consumers are found to be the central theme in the present state of research on green consumer behaviour. The purchase decisions are described 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).



### Environment Justification

This factor had questions related to how respondents feel when they buy green products, the benefit derived by the society at large and also to analyze respondents firm believe about the positive impact on environment when they buy green products, we were actually interested in analysing the human values. Schwartz (1994) defines human values as desirable goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in people’s lives. McCarty and Shrum (1994) believe that it makes intuitive sense that the values one holds would influence behaviors that work for a common or societal good. Recycling, for instance, is a behavior that someone “ought” to do, even though the immediate individual rewards for engaging in it are usually scarce. Therefore, if an individual engages in recycling, it would be expected to be driven by strong values.

*H1: Environment justification significantly affect marketing promotion*

## **Environmental Consequences**

There is also an argument that consumers, who are highly involved in the green marketing, are less affected by the advertising appeal which has not effect on their purchasing intention since they have been much more grabbed to the products. However, the green appeal is significantly persuasive on those who are less involved in the environment (Chitra, 2007, p.175). This is the review that the environmental concern consumers do buy the eco-friendly products for the purpose of the environment which are not influenced by the advertising appeal rather the non-green or environment concern needs heavily advertising in order to change their attitude towards them positively.

*H2. Environmental Consequences significantly affects Marketing Promotion*

## **Marketing Promotion**

The role of marketing promotion is of a mediating variable, which tries to analyze the impact of environment justification and environment consequences, the model was developed in a manner that could help understand how the concern for environment has had an impact on marketing, we also wanted to know the impact of environment justification and environment consequences on marketing promotion. Experience and knowledge about green products can be another reason for the consumers to purchase green products (Chen, 2010; Mobley *et al.*, 2010). Easy access to information provides more knowledge about ecological issues (Luzio & Lemke, 2013; Ritter *et al.*, 2015).

*H3. Marketing promotion significantly affects Purchase Behaviour*

## **Consumer Perception**

Perception plays a major role in shaping the thought process of a consumer towards anything they purchase; it is an important and powerful motivator that acts as a catalyst in forming an image towards company or product in buying a product. It becomes all the more important for companies to bear in mind any act that might change the perception towards the consumer to shy away with. Customer satisfaction is closely related to brand trust (Delgado-BaHester and Mimuera-Aleman, 2001). in e-commerce, the dissatisfaction of customers leads to negative word of mouth regarding the inability of the service provider to meet consumer needs (Dolinsky, 1994; Halstead *et al.* 1993). On the contrary, customer satisfaction is associated with positive word-of-mouth communications and increases brand trust (Athanasopoulos *et al.*, 2001). More specifically, such findings indicate that when customers experience a high level of satisfaction, they decide to stay with the existing service provider and overrule their negative behavioural intentions. The main idea was to know if consumer perception affects purchase behaviour or not because it was seen in many studies that purchase behaviour have a significant bearing on consumer perception.

*H4. Consumer Perception significantly affects Purchase Behaviour.*

## **Environment Protection Motives**

The idea was to understand the knowledge of consumers towards ecosystem or the eco literacy. Eco literacy was developed by Laroche *et al.* (1996) to measure the respondent's ability to identify or define a number of ecologically-related symbols, concepts and behaviors. It was found to be correlated with some attitudes and behavior toward the environment. Since EPM is not affecting our prime variable (purchase

behaviour) directly but through an indirect mediating variable (marketing promotion) so importance for this variable became evident. Consumers who take into account the environmental impact on their consumption pattern and willing to change their purchasing behaviour can be regarded as green consumers (Florenthal & Arling, 2011; Luzio & Lemke, 2013; Ritter *et al.*, 2015; Tiwari *et al.*, 2011). Green consumers decision to purchase green products is becoming a central issue in the present state of green marketing research. The purchase decision can be traced from the consumer's enthusiasm to support environmentally friendly companies (Laroche, Bergeron, & Barbaro-Forleo, 2001), performing the purchasing activities (Mishra & Sharma, 2010), putting into practice a sustainable consumption pattern (Young *et al.*, 2010), and willingness to spend more money to acquire green products (Hasan & Ali, 2015; Laroche *et al.*, 2001).

*H5. Environment Protection Motives significantly affects Purchase Behaviour*

### **Purchase Behaviour**

This happens to be the dependent factor for our study as all variables will ultimately affect (directly or indirectly) purchase behaviour. The two most studied behaviour in the ecological literature, with respect to environmentally friendly behaviours, are *Importance* and *Inconvenience*. Amyx *et al.* (1994) define perceived importance, with respect to the environment, as the degree to which one expresses concern about ecological issues. In other words, importance is simply whether consumers view environmentally compatible behaviors as important to themselves or society as a whole. Inconvenience refers to how inconvenient it is perceived for the individual to behave in an ecologically favourable fashion. For example, a person may feel that recycling is important for the long-run good of the society, but he or she may also feel that it is personally inconvenient. Similarly, a consumer may know that single-serve aseptically packaged juices or puddings will harm the environment, but still buy them because they are convenient. The measure of Inconvenience was the most important factor that was being tested, it has been found that Inconvenience is the feeling that hinders the process of actual purchase, for example, consumers may feel that buying recycling products will have a good impact on the ecosystem but when it comes to actual purchase they tend to avoid purchase for many reasons like product being expensive, design not as per expectation, bulky etc.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Most of the studies on green consumer behaviour have evaluated environmental behaviour based on the self-reported claims in response to the questionnaire items (Steg and Vlek, 2009). The unit of analysis in this study was the consumer level. Questionnaire survey was applied in this study to collect information from the consumers. Information collected through consumer survey was utilized for further analysis and verification of hypotheses. The sample in the study was selected mainly by using a snowball sampling technique which relied on chain referrals to recruit eligible participants. The candidates were contacted by telephone or personally and they were asked if they were willing to participate in the study. The study was conducted in Bhimtal, Bhowali and Haldwani Uttarakhand, India. The demographic characteristics are mentioned in Table I. A total of 284 valid responses were collected. Out of these, 156 (54.9 per cent) were male and 128 (45 per cent) were female. The demographic characteristics are mentioned in Table II. The data were analysed using exploratory factor analysis to identify and validate the items contributing to each component. Model fit was also estimated using confirmatory factor analysis. Further, hypotheses testing were carried out to understand the relationship of variables identified with the green product purchase

decisions of consumers. These tests were then interpreted based on the support from the literature. The questionnaire was developed in which the first part was to capture the demographics however there were no research findings based on the demographics, the second part was designed to test and quantify the relationship hypothesised. Further, hypotheses testing using structural equation modelling were carried out to test the relationships of variables identified with the green product purchase decisions of consumers. These tests were then interpreted based on the support from the literature. All measurements in the study were subjective assessments by the respondents using a five-point Likert-type scale (with end-points 1 strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree).

**Table 1**  
**Demographic Characteristic of the Sample**

	<i>Frequency (%)</i>
<i>Gender (n = 284)</i>	
Male	156 (54.9)
Female	128 (45)
<i>Age (n = 284)</i>	
Under 18 years	11 (04)
18-24 years	45 (16)
25-34 years	42 (15)
35-44 years	71 (25)
45-55 years	56 (20)
55 and above	27 (17)
<i>Academic qualification (n = 284)</i>	
Non – matriculate	03 (01)
High school (Matriculation/12th)	20 (07)
Bachelor’s Degree	88 (31)
Professional/Master’s Degree	167 (59)
Doctorate Degree	01 (01)
<i>Professional status (n = 284)</i>	
Student	37 (13)
Looking for work	03 (01)
Homemaker	20 (07)
Employed (salaried)	133 (47)
Self – employed (Business/freelancer/others)	48 (17)
Retired	34 (12)

## ANALYSES AND FINDINGS

Tabulation of data for our research was first done in MS excel followed by conducting a factor analysis for scrutinizing the reliability of the questionnaire and hypotheses testing.

### Reliability and factor analyses

Our Reliability analysis showed a Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for our questionnaire of 0.837 which is comparable with the reliabilities reported in (Laroche *et al.* (2001)). Factor analysis was then conducted based on principle component analysis and varimax rotation. Bartlett’s test of sphericity was 0.000 and KMO value was 0.817,

this showed that factorability assumption was met. As per (Kucukusta *et al.*, 2013; Gregory and Leo, 2003)) Only those factor loading that were above 0.6 were retained. The variables were grouped in eight factors (Table III) all of which accounted for 83 per cent of the total variance.

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) using Amos V25.0 and Maximum Likelihood Estimate (MLE) method was conducted to develop a measurement model as AMOS is a versatile statistical technique that analysis non-experimental data and also test's the relationship between observed and unobserved factors along with the strength of relationship among them, it also gives the researcher the flexibility of comparing competing conceptual models and rejecting alternative models. To analyse the stability of the scale, CFA was used on the sample using SEM We developed a measurement model using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and item's i1, i2, i5, i9, i10, i11, i13, i16, i23, i24, i28, i30, i33, i34, i36, i37, i39 were removed for having a better fit model

**Table 2**  
**Exploratory Factor Analysis**

<i>Items</i>	<i>Factor Loadings</i>
<i>Fcr1: Environment Protection Motives [EPM] (<math>\alpha = 0.876</math>)</i>	
i26 My habits while purchasing green products affects my concern for our environment.	0.651
i27 When the resources of the environment are being wasted, I get concerned.	0.804
i31 I feel in the NEXT 5 years environment will degrade more	0.817
<i>Fcr2: Environment Justification [EJ] (<math>\alpha = 0.847</math>)</i>	
i25 Concern for environmental prospects have a major bearing on my action when purchasing green products.	0.685
i35 I instinctively feel that my action will benefit the environment and hence the society at large	0.767
i38 I firmly believe that my purchase decision of green product will have a positive impact on the environment	0.818
<i>Fcr3: Environmental Consequences [EC] (<math>\alpha = 0.856</math>)</i>	
i14 I feel that Green Products are very safe for my purpose	0.744
i21 Green Products are very sophisticated	0.696
i32 While buying green products, it gives me a deep sense of feeling, that I am caring for the environment which has been exploited over the centuries.	0.619
i40 I would buy this product/brand rather than any other brands available.	0.634
<i>Fcr4: Consumer Perception [CP] (<math>\alpha = 0.914</math>)</i>	
i19 I feel that Green Products are very practical.	0.817
i29 I am willing to be inconvenienced in order to take actions that are more environmentally friendly.	0.858
<i>Fcr5: Marketing Promotion [MP] (<math>\alpha = 0.762</math>)</i>	
i3 The result of Jingle in an advertisement has a positive effect on my buying of green products.	0.689
i6 Price related information in the labelling has a positive effect on my buying the green products	0.779
i7 Message related to Product availability has an effect on my purchase for green products	0.735
i8 The information about the past experience of customers towards green products have an effect on my purchasing of green products.	0.634
<i>Fcr6: Purchase Behaviour [PB] (<math>\alpha = 0.759</math>)</i>	
i4 Celebrity Endorsement influences me in buying green products	0.644
i20 Green Products is very exciting to me	0.804
i22 Green Products is sensuous to me	0.629

As per (Browne and Cudeck, 1993) satisfactory levels of Model fit was achieved with CFI obtained as 0.674; the RMSEA as 0.000. The six-factor model had the best overall fit to the data with Chi – square of 2.711, goodness of fit index (GFI) of 0.995 and an adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) of 0.974, it can thus be inferred that green consumers are best identified along six dimensions. From the literature review variables that have been identified holds the support of the empirical analysis conducted. The first factor “Environment Protection Motives” explains how consumers feel when they buy green products coupled with their concern for resources being wasted and a feeling that degradation of environment will be more with time to come. The second factor “Environment Justification” explains how consumers feel their actions will affect their purchasing of green products, the effect on environment on their decision to purchase green products and a feeling that their decisions will have a positive impact on the environment. The third factor “Environmental Consequences” elaborates how consumers feel when they use green products like its safety aspects, its sophistications a deep sense of feeling that consumers action will have a caring effect on the environment that has been ignored for centuries and distinction and preference to buy green products over non green products. The fourth factor “Consumer Perception” is related to analysing the feeling that green products are practical and no one else can convince the respondents about the benefits of green products. Fifth factor “Green product attributes and quality” is related to a feeling that green products are long lasting, helpful and the effect of various media messages on influencing consumers to buy green products. The sixth factor “Marketing promotion” describes how advertisements and marketing effects purchasing of green products. The seventh factor “Consumer Intension” describes the effect of labelling and being so convinced with the product that recommending the product is an option. And finally eighth factor “Purchase Behaviour” focuses on understanding how celebrity endorsement influences respondents to buy green products and a feeling of excitement while using the product and a sense of delight while using green products.

### **Hypotheses Testing**

This discussion focuses on testing the proposed hypotheses by converting the measurement model to structural model in AMOS (Figure 2). Results were interpreted using regression weight table. First the relationship between environment justification and Marketing Promotion is found to be not statistically significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). This does not support H1; indicating that, individuals who can justify the importance of environment will do what it takes to have a good environment and marketing efforts of companies will have no effect on it. This finding is consistent to those of Follows and Jobber (2000), who tested positive that consumers who understand environmental consequences of their consumption patterns have environmentally responsible purchase intention. The relationship between environmental consequences and marketing promotion is found to be statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). this supports H2, indicating that environmental consequences have a major bearing on marketing promotions so companies must continuously focus on its showing advertisement that educate consumers to become more concerned about the environment, so that agility of there products can be increased. This finding is consistent to those of Lee (2009), who also tested positive that consumers who understand significant role of individual actions in making a difference in environmental quality have environmentally responsible purchase intention. The relationship between marketing promotion and purchase behaviour H3 is also supported ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the study. This finding is consistent to those of D’Souza *et al.* (2006) and Kim and Chung (2011) who found positive influence of consumers’ experience with green products on environmentally friendly purchase



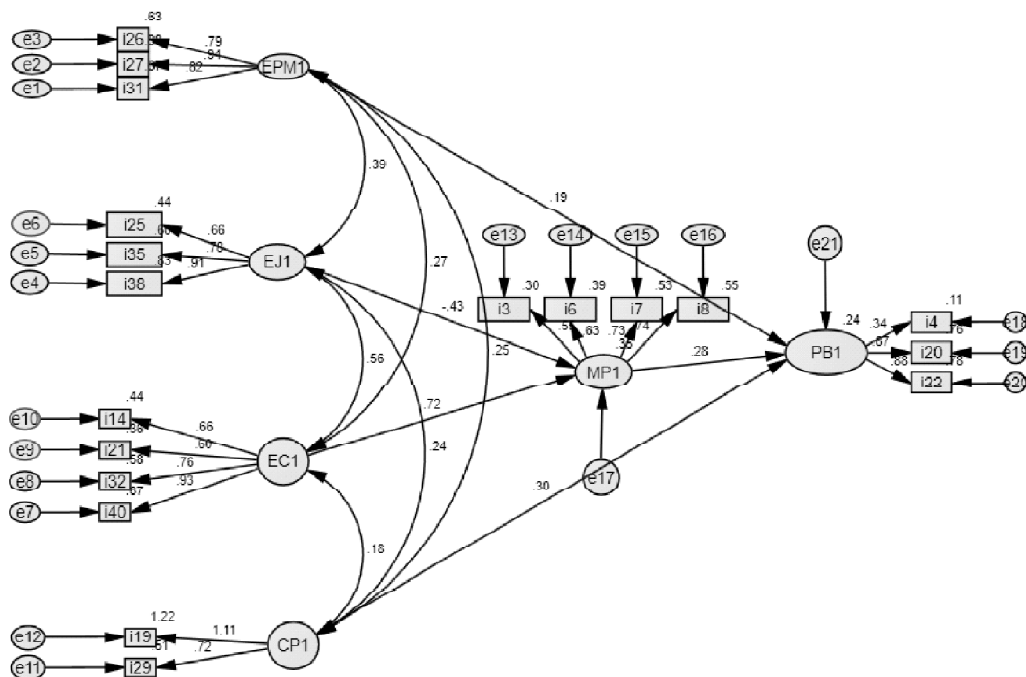


Figure 1: Output of Structural Model Using Amos

behaviour. Also, the study supports relationship between Consumer Perception and Purchase Behaviour H4 ( $p > 0.05$ ), which is consistent to those of Laroche *et al.* (2002) who found the two positively related.

It clearly shows that consumers only purchase products manufactured from those companies who have concern for the environment and tend to castigate those companies who do not. Also the relationship between environment protection motives and purchase behaviour was found to be statistically significant H5 ( $p < 0.05$ ) which indicates that individuals who want to be associated with environmentally friendly society and also contribute towards developing and maintaining environmental friendly standard of living are more inclined towards purchasing green products. This result is consistent to those of Lee (2009), Oliver and Lee (2010) and Ozaki and Sevastyanova (2011). So, Environment Protection Motives (EPM), Environment Justification [EJ], Environmental Consequences [EC], Consumer Perception [CP], Marketing Promotion [MP] and Purchase Behaviour [PB], results in an  $R^2 = 0.72$ . In short we can say that the observed variables explain 72 per cent of the variance of purchase behaviour of consumers towards green products. A summary of hypothesis testing is shown below.

Table 3  
Results of Hypotheses Testing

Sl. no.	Hypotheses	Findings
H1	Environment Justification significantly affects Marketing Promotion.	Not Supported ( $p > 0.05$ )
H2	Environmental Consequences significantly affects Marketing Promotion.	Supported ( $p < 0.05$ )
H3	Marketing promotion significantly affects Purchase Behaviour.	Supported ( $p < 0.05$ )
H4	Consumer Perception significantly affects Purchase Behaviour.	Not Supported ( $p > 0.05$ )
H5	Environment Protection Motives significantly affects Purchase Behaviour.	Supported ( $p < 0.05$ )

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Environment concern being of utmost importance to consumers has prompted marketers to produce products that are eco friendly. Green consumers are a serious matter for research sphere to concentrate their focus on these consumers' consumption patterns. So our conclusion was how companies marketing strategies impact consumer's purchase intension and purchase behaviour, findings of our study revealed that the relationship between environment justification and marketing promotion had no statistical significance between them, this finding was important because it suggested that consumers who firmly believe that they have to care about the environment are really not bothered about what the companies do to promote green products, they buy green products because they care for the environment. Our analysis goes a bit further in knowing the relationship between environmental consequences and marketing promotions that tried to investigate consumers who are concerned for the environment because of marketing done by companies showed that there was a statistical significance between the two, as expected because these consumers would buy green products only when there is substantial efforts undertaken by marketers to promote the product. The next analysis was between marketing promotions effect on purchase behaviour and as expected the results were statistically significant which implies that companies need to constantly promote their green products to increase purchase behaviour of consumers, it can also be inferred that the higher the promotion the better the purchase. Our next conclusion was a bit surprising as the probability value was less than .001 hence forcing us to conclude that consumer perception has no effect on purchase behaviour, the only reason could have been because the study was limited to Bhimtal, Haldwani and Bhowali and respondents are more inclined to buy necessary products as compared to luxury products as these places are not very lucrative for marketers so the awareness level impacts purchase behaviour and finally the study looks at environmentally protection motives and compares it with purchase behaviour and the results were statistically significant and were consistent with the results of Lee (2009), Oliver and Lee (2010) and Ozaki and Sevastyanova (2011).

## **LIMITATION AND DIRECTION FOR FUTURE SCOPE**

The research study had limitations of the sample data from cities like Haldwani, Bhimtal and Bhowali which are towns and all come under tier 3 cities of India which may not represent the Indian population per se. Since snow ball sampling was used it can create biasness, since the study was cross-sectional rather than longitudinal in its approach that could have led to changes in behaviour of our respondents. Response can also suffer from over or under reporting and since the research focused on analytical generalization as against statistical generalization so all in all such limitations could not be ignored. Further, future research should also focus on conditions and situations under which consumers change their behaviour towards the environment. Examining cross-cultural similarities and differences in green consumers in a diversified country like India is a domain of challenge. Practitioners and academics alike would benefit from more focused research in this area. Kreidler and Joseph-Mathews (2009) mention that the number of consumers who are interested in buying green products, using sustainable products and being socially responsible are ever increasing and is no more limited. So, the researchers can also focus on testing contemporary marketing in environmental perspective.

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