Young Consumers’ Purchase Intentions of Buying Green Products

A study based on the Theory of Planned Behavior

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ABSTRACT

This investigation explored the contextual factors affecting young consumers’ attitudes and their intentions of green purchase behavior in the area of consumer behavior. This study seeks to understand young consumers’ green purchase intentions based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). At the same time, this study also intends to detect variables that influence young consumers’ intentions of buying green products.

In this thesis, a quantitative approach was adopted. Using a sample of 282 young people, a survey was developed and conducted in Umeå University, Sweden.

Results indicate that parental influence is the top predictor among all the variables we studied. From the correlation analyses; we can see that top three predictors are important for understanding purchase intentions of young consumers. Influence of contextual and background factors –parents, peer, and environmental knowledge – clearly played an important role in influencing young consumers’ purchase intentions of buying green products. To the end, a proposed model is developed to understand green purchase intentions of young consumers.

Implications for marketers are also discussed in this study.

Keywords: attitude, intentions, purchase, green, contextual, young, environment
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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Today, society is cluttered with marketing activities, and these activities surround us constantly. Among the issues of marketing, a vital part that influences human roles and activities is “environment”, more specifically the “green environment”. The green environment is now a leading concern for marketers. The concept of environmentalism and becoming green was not so prominent before the late 1980s. The green movement started in Great Britain; British consumers played an initial role of "Greening" movement. Company’s contribution to environmental degradation and damage influenced consumers to adopt the greening movement. Thus, eco-friendly marketing concepts spread beyond the Great Britain boundary. Furthermore, some realists raised their voices about sustainable green consumerism that does not harm environment (Polonsky, 1994; Prothero, 1990).

The evolution of green marketing issues becomes more apparent since the 1990s. Before this, green consumerism was not so popular worldwide. In some western countries, they first initiated the term “Green” in their marketing ideas and journals in the 1980s. Social marketing concepts were prominent before these green marketing issues (Prothero, 1990). In the late 1960s and early 1970s, becoming consumerist and adapting an environmentally friendly behavior was considered as mutually exclusive issues (Bohlen et al., 1993). Thus, an increased interest towards environmental issues and published materials also comes into focus with this issue at the end of 1980s (Bragd, 1999, p. 7) but, the demand for green products has been shown to be uneven across different market segments (Ottman, 1993; Peattie, 1992).

The demand for green products can vary due to differences in ethnical beliefs and people’s active participation on environmental issues. The ethnical beliefs and attitudes toward environmental friendly affairs also differ through socio economic characteristics. Among these socio-economic characteristics, age is a strong determinant that influences consumer’s buying behavior and buying patterns greatly. For example, old people are tended to spend more time on reading and recycling than young people. On contrary, young people are more willing to participate outdoor activities, and like to join group events. Johnson et al., (2004) also commented that a person’s environmental beliefs and behaviour can be explained by his age (Johnson et al., 2004, pp. 179, 180).

There are several other factors that can strongly affect young consumers’ purchase behavior of green consumption. Previous researchers have found consumers’ role is influenced by two conceptual thoughts. One is direct consumer skills, and the other is indirect consumer skills. Direct consumer skills are directly relevant to consumption behavior and purchase transactions. The indirect skills are those of knowledge, attitude and other marketing stimuli (Moschis & Churchill, 1979, p. 41). Therefore, marketers can assist organizations in establishing and communicating a strong environmental image, and help to create a clear competitive advantage to their consumers (Bohlen, et al., 1993, p. 428).
Previous articles and papers have been written regarding environmental states and how industries can incorporate themselves in the welfare of environment (Ottman, 1993). According to Coddington (1993, p. 199) environmental marketing modifies the role of environment in corporate management practices. In addition, it also brings changes about the role of a marketer in environmental management. Coddington (1993, p. 199) also commented that corporations and industries not only to sell their products with colorful and attractive packaging as well as manufacture products that are green in order to appeal to customers.

There were relatively few attempts taken to specify environmentally friendly purchasing behavior over the last twenty years (Bohlen, et al., 1993, p. 36). Consumers’ buying behavior shifts radically over this time period. In addition, they become familiar with two terms that denote green movement. The first term is “sustainable development”, and the second term is “green movement” (Iyer & Zinkhan, 1994, p. 129). Generally, people try to behave positively when they feel threatened by the environment (Tanner, 1999, p. 153). According to Tanner (1999, p.153) states environmental problems are now a growing issue and human behaviour related to this phenomenon is considered as an important element for creating environmental awareness.

It is evident that the growth of ecologically favorable consumer behavior is increasing due to the present environmental degradation. Previous studies have reported that people use products and services for their physical comfort, mobility, relief from labor, enjoyment, power status, personal security, maintenance of tradition and family, etc. (Stern, 2000, p. 408). A different view is that people are now more concerned about their consumption styles. In recent years, a study made by Dunlap stated (1986, cited in Mainieri et al., 1997, p. 190). During the period 1977 to 1986, the percentage of Americans who preferred sacrificing economic growth rather than environmental protection enlarged 35% to 58%. Another study made by Coddington (1990, p. 7) examined that 79% of Americans want to consider themselves as environmentalists, 82% state they have recycled, 83% state they have changed their shopping habits to protect the environment, and 67% state that they would be willing to pay 5% to 10% more for environmentally compatible products. The focus of consumers has shifted toward environmental protection.

Consumers who are now more aware about environmental protection are more concerned about ecological lifestyles. People want to improve their lifestyles by taking new challenges. They consider that environmental protection is not only the responsibility of firms and institutions, but it is also their responsibility as consumers. People’s personalities manipulate what attitudes they have toward the environment (Fraj & Martinez, 2006, 2007).

According to (Katz, 1960, p. 168) attitude is the tendency of an individual to evaluate some objects or symbols in a favorable or unfavorable manner. Alwitt & Berger (1993, p. 189) commented that the ability of attitudes is to predict behavior for environmentally sensitive products. The ability of attitudes can be enhanced by considering the attitude’s strength as well as its valence. Alwitt & Berger’s study found that 70% of consumers show their concern for the environment, but their actions are inconsistent with these attitudes when it comes to consuming products and services. They commented that the likeness of a product
depends on attitude with a varying degree of confidence, certainty, accessibility or knowledge. Therefore, many researchers moved to social psychological research in the attitude area to improve a comprehensive theory of consumer behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980, p. 153).

Ajzen & Fishbein (1980, p. 62) demonstrated that there is a strong empirical relation between intention and behavior. They mentioned that an individual’s behavior is defined by his intention to perform the behavior, and this intention is a function of his attitude toward the behavior and his subjective norm. The study of attitudes and subjective norms is the first step to understand why people behave the way they do.

1.2 Problem Discussion

Young people are described the ages of 15 and 24 (United Nations 2004, Commonwealth Secretariat 2011). However, the concept of youth differs from culture to culture and from one society to another. In a study made by Richard Curtain quoted in the U.N World Youth Report (2003) the concept of youth is a bit more complex. His study found that four distinct aspects of young people’s movement from dependence to independence are as follows: (1) leaving the parental home and making new living arrangements, (2) having full-time education, (3) maintaining close, stable personal relationship outside of family, (4) trying to enter the labor market, finding work and possibly setting into a career, and achieving a more or less stable livelihood (United Nations 2004, p. 6).

Numerous studies supported the importance of young consumers’ appeal toward environmental friendly products (Ottman et al., 2006, p. 29; Tai & Tam, 1997, p. 304; Lee, 2011, p. 21). For example, Tai & Tam's study (1997) found that younger women in China were adopting new values and western ideas quickly. Indeed, women in China and Taiwan were also more environmentally conscious and have substantial earnings and decision-making power. These women are becoming very fashion conscious and are able to spend on costly foreign brands as well. Recent evidence also suggests that young people have been acknowledged as a differentiated segment of the market for a variety of products and services. In addition, the behavior of young people has received increasing attention among marketers (Moschis & Moore, 1979, p. 101).

To understand this segment, it is important to know what factors are playing key roles in buying decisions. For example, Lee (2011, p. 23) identified two types of factors to conceptualize the green purchase behavior of Hong Kong adolescents: Individual factors and Contextual factors. Individual factors are local environmental awareness, local environmental involvement, and concrete environmental knowledge. On the other hand, Contextual factors are media exposure to environmental messages, parental influence, and peer influence. We have found the importance of these factors to understand green purchase behavior of young consumers.
Contextual Factors

An individual’s environmental friendly behavior also depends on his or her social context. A study made by Tikka et al., (2000, p. 12) pointed out that the social context as well as social groups influence our thoughts and acts. As we belong to different social groups and our social context is also different from one another, so our attitude toward the ecological behavior will be significantly different from one another.

Tanner et al., (2004, p. 96) commented that contextual barriers influence the likelihood of people’s knowledge and motivation to act, so an individual’s behavior is influenced by multiple contextual factors; it is hard to detect which factor influences the most. Different contextual conditions usually obstruct each other. For example, when you clean clothes, your primary goal is to get the clothes clean. You will consider the secondary goals later that are related to environmental impact. You would like to do it in such a way that will save energy, water and not pollute the environment. According to Hormuth (1999, p. 278), secondary goals depend on many variables such as attitude (person variables), social norms (situational variables), functions and the other characteristics that influence its meaning, but the meaning of an object is acquired by its use and its social context. This view is supported by Young et al., (2010, p. 25) who writes that contextual factors are also important in green purchase decisions.

In this study, we have also found the importance of consumer socialization to investigate the contextual factors affecting young consumers’ attitudes, but the current literature does not provide enough information about contextual environments (Olli et al., 2001, p. 182). In addition, the main weakness of the previous studies is the failure to address how these factors are important for understanding the attitudes of young consumers. Therefore, in this paper we want to investigate the contextual factors affecting young consumers’ attitudes and their intentions of green purchase behavior.

In summary, we see the importance of fulfilling the knowledge gap of contextual factors concerning young consumers’ intentions of green purchase behavior. Recent evidence found that the reasoned action perspective is demonstrated to be consistent with the results of recent research on the attitude-behavior relation (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2000, p. 27). Therefore, we consider that the value of using Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) for our study will be useful to answer the research question.

1.3 Research Question

What are the contextual factors affecting young consumers’ attitudes and their intentions of buying green products?

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the thesis is to increase the understanding of contextual factors affecting young consumers’ attitudes and their intentions of green purchase in the area of consumer
behavior using the Theory of Planned Behavior. To fulfill this purpose, the following objectives will be implemented.

The first research objective is to identify the contextual factors affecting young consumers’ attitudes, and the second research objective is to understand young consumer’s purchase intentions of green products with the theory of planned behavior. In addition, this study will help marketers to plan more efficient and effective marketing plan targeting at young consumers. As the literature has given little attention on the contextual environments, this study aims to hold a better understanding of contextual factors that might affect young consumers’ intentions of buying green products. We hope that the findings of this study would provide a foundation for understanding green purchase intentions of young consumers.

1.5 Limitation

In this study, we consider following limitations. First, our study intends to explore young consumers’ purchase intention of buying green products in general. This study is not based on young consumers’ intention of buying a particular green product. Secondly, the student sample is taken from a particular location. The characteristics of the sample may show different results to other locations because young peoples’ behavior is also influenced by other background factors (e.g. culture, personality, emotion, values, general attitudes, experience, income, etc.) In addition, the sample included both Swedish and other international students, so the behavior of the respondents may be influenced by cultural effects. Thirdly, scale items used to measure contextual factors are limited in this study.

1.6 Term Definitions

**Eco-Literacy:** Eco-literacy means consumer’s knowledge on environmental friendly products. Eco-literacy can influence a consumer’s decision making process. Eco-literacy can be defined in a way of symbols, concepts, and behavior of consumers that can help them understand the symbolic meaning of nature (Laroche & Toffoli, 1996, p. 197).

**Green Products:** Green products are improved in performance to the environment and society. Green products are significantly better version related to traditional product offerings available in the market for its production, usage, and disposal (Peattie, 1995, p. 181). These green products are environmentally safe and preferable products and services. For example, green cars, recycled products, energy efficient electronics, organic tea, etc.

**Green Consumerism:** Green consumerism means the buying habits of a consumer that are environmental friendly products and services and not harmful for the environment. The rising demand for purchasing green products inspired the marketers to adopt green consumerism strategy (Prothero, 1990, p. 95).

**Reference Group:** Individual behavior sometime affected by other peoples’ opinion and experience that is referred here as reference group. For example: friends, family members,
fellow workers, and relatives, etc.). Reference group is a group or a person that influence significantly in an individual’s behavior (Bearden & Etzel, 1982, p. 184).

**Sustainable Development:** Sustainable development means the fulfillment of human needs without degrading the environment for present situation as well as for future generations. Sustainable development can be described as the future generations’ needs, social justice regardless of racial discrimination, and protection of environmental degradation for the betterment of peoples’ lifestyle (Giddings et al., 2002, p. 194).
1.7 Disposition of the Thesis

Chapter One
Introduction
Introduction of the research topic, background information of the research, and the research question.

Chapter Two
Theoretical Framework
Children development, young consumers’ involvement contextual factors, and TPB.

Chapter Three
Methodology
Overview of methodological approach and considerations related to the research.

Chapter Four
Results and Analysis
Empirical findings of the research and analysis of the results.

Chapter Five
Discussion
Discussion about the findings and relates the results in practical situation.

Chapter Six
Conclusion
General overview about research findings and further research suggestion for further study.

Chapter Seven
Credibility of Research
Credibility of the research findings: reliability and validity and generalisability.
CHAPTER TWO

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A literature review is essential in research areas, and it follows four important steps to conduct a review. According to Knopf (2006, p. 129), a literature review must address four set of steps. The first step is to examine the study of an individual. The second step is to concentrate on how other researchers have accomplished conclusion from their examination. The third step is to summarize the collective results. To accomplish the third step, researchers need to sort out the results into three different categories: firstly, researchers will find out what they have found common in the existing studies and reports. Secondly, researchers need to identify any disagreement found in the literature. Thirdly, anything is overlooked in the study. Finally, the fourth step is to judge the quality of the literature overall.

2.1 Children Development as Consumers

In the past, market and consumer researchers overlooked the consumer behavior of young people. Socialization researchers emphasis on the sex role learning and moral development of young consumers instead of focusing on consumer learning and behavior. One criticism of much of the literature on the consumer behavior of young people is that researchers ignored the importance of childhood experiences. So far, however, there has been little discussion about childhood experiences are somehow very important in later life as the adult behavior may be predicted by knowing about the childhood experiences. In addition, most studies in the field of consumer behavior did not focus on young people because of their little disposable income (Ward, 1974, p. 1).

Ward (1974, p. 2) published a paper in which he proposed that the key issues are important to understand consumer socialization processes. The issues are: (1) the way children develop consumer skills, knowledge and attitudes, (2) the content of these socialization processes, and (3) how early learning shape later cognitions and behavior related to consumption. We are not going to examine the socialization process of young people in this paper. We are studying the concept of socialization of young people as it will help to indentify the key factors affecting for the development of young peoples’ consumer behavior.

Children were first treated as consumers in the 1960s. The history of children’s consumer development dates back to the 1950s with the publication of a few isolated studies. After that, a considerable amount of literature has been published on children’s understanding of marketing and retail functions (McNeal, 1964 cited in John, 1999, p. 183). Consumer socialization is a developmental process that proceeds through a series of stages as children mature into adult life. These changes take place through these series of stages helping the process of consumer socialization of children. The stages are perceptual stage, the analytical stage and the reflective stage. The perceptual stage (ages 3-7) can be defined as a general orientation toward the instant and readily visible perceptual features of the market.
place. At this stage, children make decisions on the basis of very limited information, usually a single perceptual dimension of objects and events. This stage is an important stage in developing information processing abilities. They learn how to process information at this stage. Though, children may be aware about their parent’s views at this stage, but they have difficulty of thinking about their own views. The evidence also suggest that children have difficulty of thinking about their own views and that of another person concurrently (John, 1999, p. 186-187). **The analytical stage** (ages 7-11) contains some of the most important developments in terms of consumer knowledge and skills. During this stage, enormous developmental changes take place both cognitively and socially. For example, children increase their information processing abilities quickly during this stage and demonstrate more thoughtfulness in their choices. They learn to negotiate for desired items. In addition, they can think and make decision from the perspective of their parents and friends (John, 1999, p. 187). **The Reflective stage** (ages 11-16) is the further development of cognitive and social developmental stage building more sophisticated information processing and social skills. During this time, children become more focused on the social meanings. Moreover, children understand their own identity as well as the concepts of branding and pricing at this stage.

Previous studies have reported that the consumption-related activities of adolescents vary, and their consumption related activities are categorized on the basis of cognitive complexity (simple vs. complex), and consumption behavior (direct vs. complex). First, direct-simple skills include attitudes toward advertisements, brands, etc. Second, indirect-simple skills include knowledge about the marketplace. Third, direct-complex skills include the ability to differentiate advertising stimuli, seek information, etc. Fourth, indirect-complex skills include two kind of motives: materialism and consumption (Moschis & Churchill 1979, p. 41)

**Attitude Formation**

Social scientists normally assume that there are three types of responses which are liable for attitude formation. These are cognitive, affective and behavioral categories. Peoples’ thought about the attitude object is considered as cognitive category or cognitive response. Affective category is related to peoples’ emotions and feelings to the attitude product. Behavioral category deals with the peoples’ actions to a product (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, p. 10). The influence of attitude is presented in the figure below.

![Figure 1: Attitude components (cognitive, affective, and behavioral). Adapted from The Psychology of Attitudes, by Eagly & Chaiken (1993, p. 10).](image-url)
Cognitive responses are thoughts or ideas which are often termed as beliefs. Beliefs are shaped by positive and negative attributes towards an attitude object. On the other hand, affective responses are the emotions or feelings that might be in form of favorable and unfavorable to the attitude object, and behavioral response is the strong evaluations either in positive way or negative way. These types of responses are regarded as intentions to an attitude object. Positive evaluation about an object creates positive intentions and negative evaluation about an object creates negative intention (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, p. 11-13).

2.2 Product Involvement Factors Among Young Consumers

Recent evidence suggests that product involvement variables are significantly important in a way of processing marketing and advertising information (Muratore 2003; Te'eni-Harari et al., 2009). A study made by Te'eni-Harari & Hornik (2010, p. 499) found that five variables may influence young people product involvement: a young person’s age, an individual’s subjective knowledge, parental influence, peers influence, and product category. Another study found that the advertising effectiveness of children is positively influenced by product involvement. When children are in a high level of product involvement, their attitudes are influenced. When children perceive that the product is not relevant or meaningless for them, their attitudes measure treated as a lower degree influence. (Te'eni-Harari et al., 2009).

2.2.1 Age

A considerable amount of literature has been published on age. These studies have found variations in levels of product involvement between different age groupings of adults (Feick et al., 2003; Quester & Smart 1993; Slama & Tashchian 1985). A study of Quester & Smart (1993, p. 48) found significant differences between the involvement levels of the 18-29 and 30-41 years age groups, and the 30-41 and 42-54 years age group.

2.2.2 Subjective Product Knowledge

Te'eni-Harari & Hornik (2010, p. 500) commented that level of product involvement among young is influenced by subjective product knowledge. When a person see an advertisement of a particular brand, his generalized knowledge can lead to greater levels of response to a message (Batra & Ray, 1986, p. 433). Consumers who have a lot of knowledge about a particular product can perceive the product as being important. On contrary, consumers who are not knowledgeable about a particular product can not perceive the product as being important (Lutz et al., 1983, p. 532).

2.2.3 Social Influence

Social influence on purchase decision plays significant role in consumer behavior. Consumers’ buying decisions depend on the information they collect from various sources in a society. There are different sources of information provider in a society, among them reference groups play major role that affect consumers involvement in purchase situations.
Another study conducted by Feick et al., (2003) suggests social network and product involvement are co-related. Young consumers are greatly influenced by their social network that they maintain (e.g. family, friends, coworker, etc.). Initially, they collect information from their social network and finally they decide about their brand choice.

2.2.4 Product Category Involvement

A study made by Dens & Pelsmacker (2010, p. 50) have found that purchase intention of a consumer depends upon two levels of product category involvement. One is high levels of product involvement and the other is low levels of involvement. High product involvement needs higher levels of informational appeals and lower levels of product involvement require emotional appeals. Informational appeal fulfills the knowledge of a consumer. An examination conducted by Harari & Hornik (2010, p. 504) have found different age group in between 4-15 years children were influenced differently in product involvement in different product categories. Thus, product involvement emphasizes the importance of growing up a child as a consumer.

2.3 Individual Factors

Several studies have revealed that an individual’s environment related perception, cognition and emotion are positively associated with environmental behavior (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002; Barr, 2003; Schultz et al., 2004).

Environmental Awareness

When an individual is aware of environmental problems, this is the first step for them to understand the various forms of environmentally sensitive behavior including green purchase behavior. The correlations between the awareness and attitudes have a positive impact on purchasing behavior. Peoples’ positive feelings toward the final decision making go into parallel way (Roberts, 1996, p. 226). According to Lee & Shin (2011, p. 194), “a higher awareness level of corporate social contribution and local community contribution, as CSR activities, had more positive effects on consumers’ purchase intentions”. Thus, creating awareness toward environmental friendly products has a great impact on creating knowledge and making favorable attitudes.

Environmental Knowledge

Arcury (1990) claimed that environmental increased knowledge about the environment supports positive attitudes. Numerous studies have attempted to explain students studying environmental courses demonstrated an increase in liable environmental behavior and an increased awareness of environmental issues (Jaus, 1984; Jordan et al.,1986; Ramsey & Rickson 1976; Ramsey, 1993). A study made by Bradley et. al., (1999, p. 20) found that students possessing favorable environmental attitudes in an enviornmental course tended to have positive environmental attitudes after their participation of the course. Their study also suggested that increased knowledge helped to improve environmental attitudes. According to Amyx et al., individuals who having high knowledge on enviornmental issues want to
pay a premium price for green products (1994, cited in Laroche et al., 2001, p. 505). In a study, Laroche et al., (2001, p. 505) also commented that ecoliteracy or environmental knowledge is correlated with attitudes and behavior towards environment. Another study made by Schahn & Holzer, (1990, p. 772) suggested that appropriate knowledge about environmental problems is a predictor of environment responsible behavior. Though other studies reported the relationship between environmental knowledge and environment responsible behavior, but the correlations between these two variables (knowledge & Behavior) were relatively too low (Maloney & Ward, 1973, p. 585).

### Environmental Involvement/Association

An individual’s environmental involvement is a personal concern, and these environmental issues develop gradually in one’s mind. It is also associated with an individual’s beliefs to the extent of his/her participation toward nature (Schultz et. al., 2004). In the context of environmental involvement, consumers’ behavior normally becomes affected through their collective actions. For example, when an individual is involved with an environmental organization, he or she performs many activities within the organization. As a result, environmental involvement within an organization produces a positive attitude toward nature (Nas & Dekker, 1996). The evidence suggest that individual involvement is very important, and the strength of motivation on their information processing depends on one’s degree of involvement (Petty & Cacioppo 1990)

### 2.4 Contextual Factors

Lee (2011, p. 24) has addressed that contextual environments can play a role in socializing green purchase behavior. He mentioned three key contextual environments (1) media exposure, (2) parental influence, and (3) peer influence that influence young consumers’ green purchase decisions.

#### Figure 2: Conceptualization Framework

Adapted from The Green Purchase Behavior of Hong Kong Young Consumers: The role of Peer Influence, Local Environmental Involvement, and Concrete Environmental Knowledge (p.23) by Lee (2011).
2.4.1 Parents

Communication with Family members can play an important role in shaping consumer learning. The communication effects from family members can be direct or indirect. Direct influences of family communication can come from a person’s consumer behavior having the acquisition of consumption-related information and consequent formation of patterns of beliefs, norms, and behaviors from other members in a family. On the other hand, indirect influences can come from the other sources of consumer information such as mass media and peers (Moschis, 1985, p. 902).

Parental influence is seen as a socialization factor in adolescent stage. The consumption habits of a parent, their attitudes and their intentions to buy product strongly influence the consumption pattern of young adolescent people. In addition, parents who hold strong desire to consume material goods, their children also value material goods in a similar way like their parents do (Chaplin & John, 2010, p. 176).

In a study of Caruana & Vassallo (2003, pp. 55, 61) have found parental influence on purchasing behavior acts as a main role for children. They also found that family members with one child or more have different levels of parental influence on their purchase decisions. Cotte & Wood, (2004, p. 84) found parental influences not only exist in the purchase decision making process, but it is also shaping the behavior of young children. For example, parents’ creativity and their innovativeness also encourage their children to think creatively. The study also found that a young adult adopts the same and similar behavior that their parents maintain in their style and socialization process.

Previous studies have found parental influence as one of the most powerful elements among all other socializing agents. Parental supports affect the children’s behavior and their voluntary activities in a society. Children become more interested to involve themselves in social activities when they become inspired with their parents. Indeed, there are some families in which neither father nor mother are engaged in social voluntary work but they want to become a member of social voluntary works. In such situation they try to encourage their children to participate in various socially oriented organizations. Researchers’ found a strong and positive co-relation between parental influence and children’s involvement in different extracurricular activities beside school education (Fletcher et al., 2000, p. 35). Furthermore, similar findings have found in a study about the family influence on environmental awareness among the peoples’ in UK, Australia and Canada. Thus, family influence can inspire young people in shaping their behavior toward environmental awareness (Palmer, 1999, p. 199).

2.4.2 Peer

Peer relationship is a dominant factor for adolescents’ decision making. Relationship among adolescents that formed in early childhood considered as weak. The relationships in adolescent stage become more influential, intimate, and strong (Berndt, 1982). A study conducted by Gavin & Furman in 1989 found people assign more value in adolescent period. In the early and middle adolescent period, people emphasize to become a member of popular group that maintain similar opinion and thinking than different adolescent stage.
Moschis & Churchill (1979, p. 45) have found different findings in their study. They found that older adolescents’ are more knowledgeable about products and services, and they can independently able to differentiate positive and negative information from advertisements. Older adolescents buy products when they become certain that they have gathered enough information about their desired products. Another study conducted by (Childers & Rao, 1992, p. 207) found interesting findings about peer influence on consumer decision making is that peer influence become stronger when their purchase decision is related to fulfill their private and luxury consumption purposes. Again, in Thai perspective their study found that family plays significant roles in purchasing behavior. Extended family that maintain large members have greater influence on individual purchase decision than peer influence.

In a study between younger teenage girls and peer influence on fashion products purchasing decision have found a strong correlation between these two. Peer influence plays a key role for choosing fashion products especially for teenage girls. These teenage girls also value the opinions of their elder sisters who are very intimate with them. Teenage younger people even don’t bother about to pay premium prices if their peer certify the fashion products as cool (Grant & Stephen, 2006, p. 110). Another study of young consumers’ consumption pattern towards snacks and soft drinks shows positive relationships between peer influence and their purchasing behavior (Wouters et al., 2010). A study by about young adolescents’ motivation and achievement in the context of peer influence found similar to other studies. He found a young adolescent become affected with their peers’ beliefs and behaviors in their development stage (Ryan, 2001, p. 1145).

Some studies have found peer influence as a socialization process. This process plays potential role for gathering information about goods from various socializing agents. In a china based study among children information seeking sources shows they value friends as third most important influential factor (McNeal & Ji, 1999, p. 356) among other socializing factors. A survey by (Minton & Rose, 1997) found adult peoples’ buying behavior significantly varies due to the social norms.

### 2.4.3 Mass Media

The issue of advertising to children was controversial and disputed subject in the area of consumer socialization. Most studies by child psychologists and consumer researchers claimed that young children have little understanding of the persuasive intent of advertising. Butter et al., (1981, p. 82) commented that young children may understand they are watching something different than a program but do not understand that meaning of what they are watching is to tempt purchase of a product or service. Initially, Contextual factors are also assisting in the development of skeptical attitudes toward advertising.

In a study made by Soley & Reid (1984, cited in John 1999, p. 190) pointed out that family environment, peers, and television exposure also assisting in the development of skeptical attitudes toward advertising. Indeed, critical attitudes of children can be different depending upon parental control over television viewing. Some parents have control over television viewing at home and some parents are more flexible in this matter.
A number of studies have found that young peoples’ purchase decisions are also influenced by mass media. Young adolescents possess positive attitudes than older adolescents, and they are normally become more interested to gather information from a variety of communication sources (Moschis & Churchill, 1979). Gullen & Johnson (1986) made a study on short term advertising sales, and their study revealed that short term advertising have strong impact on sales. The study found some important roles on media advertising. For example, sellers can increase their sales in the short term by giving 40% percent share of voice to new buyers. Their evidence suggests that continuous advertising is more efficient than huge burst of advertisement at a time.

In a study conducted by (Fisk, 1959, p. 91) have found mass media play an effective role as a good market communication tool for conveying a message. He also found that media exposure has direct and strong correlations to consumer’s purchase decisions regardless of their age, education, and social status, etc. Another study (Atwater et al., 1985, pp. 396,397) found that consumers can gather information about environmental issues through mass media which include TV, magazine, radio, and newspapers. Overall, 83% respondents indicated that they got environment related information from a variety of media sources. Several studies have found that mass media have a significant influence on what people think (Entman, 1989, p. 347; McNeal & Ji, 1999). In a study among Chinese children indicates they become affected and as well as emotional when they see any new product information. They gave highest rank of preferences to TV commercial as a medium of information (McNeal & Ji, 1999, p. 358).

2.5 Theory of Reasoned Action

According to theory of reasoned action, human beings are rational and know the systematic use of the information. This theory is based on some assumptions, and the authors do not believe that human social behavior is controlled by unconscious motives or overriding desires. They argued that people can think over the implications of their actions before they make a decision to engage or not engage in a given behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980, p. 5).

The ultimate goal of TRA is to predict and understand an individual’s behavior, not merely predict the behavior. To understand the behavior, two basic determinants of intentions are important to consider; one is “personal in nature” and “social influence”. The personal factor depends on an individual’s positive or negative assessment of performing the behavior; hence, this factor is named attitude toward the behavior. The other reflecting social influence may come up from the perception of social pressures. When an individual is under strong social pressure, his or her behavior in question to perform or not perform the particular behavior. This factor is named subjective norm (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980, p. 6).
Behavioral beliefs are the immediate determinants of a person’s attitude. An individual may hold a large number of beliefs about a given object, but he or she can only attend a relatively small number of beliefs. These small numbers of beliefs he or she can attend are called behavioral beliefs. Indeed, these Behavioral beliefs are used to understand why a person holds a certain attitude toward an object (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980, p. 63).

A person’s behavioral beliefs usually form an attitude toward objects. The basic understanding of an individual about a given behavior is that it will produce both positive and negative consequences. On contrary, individuals who have different sets of behavioral beliefs may hold different attitudes toward behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980, p. 67). In this thesis, we have used direct measurements instead of using the equation of behavioral beliefs & attitude toward behaviors.

\[ A_0 = \sum_{i=1}^{n} b_i e_i \]

In the equation, \( A_0 \) is the attitude toward the behavior, \( n \) is the total number of salient beliefs, \( b_i \) is the strength of each salient belief is mixed in a multiplicative fashion with the subjective evaluation \( e_i \) of the belief’s attribute (Ajzen, 1991, p. 191).
Normative Beliefs and Subjective Norms

A subjective norm is an individual’s belief about others what an individual should (or should not) perform the behavior in question. When an individual’s attitude toward a behavior is driven by his or her own beliefs about performing the behavior, these beliefs are behavioral beliefs. By comparison, an individual’s subjective norm is a function of normative beliefs. They are not behavioral beliefs. In this case, individuals want to get feedback from specific individuals and groups to perform (or not perform) a behavior. When a behavior may involve a referent, an individual’s belief is guided by his or her normative beliefs (similar to subjective norms). Every possible referent will not be relevant or important for an individual’s decision making; only behavioral referents will influence an individual’s decision making (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980, pp. 73-74). In this thesis, we have used direct measurements instead of using the equation of normative beliefs and subjective Norms.

\[ SN = \sum_{i=1}^{n} nimi \]

In the equation, SN is the normative beliefs and subjective Norms. \((ni)\) is the strength of each normative beliefs, and \((mi)\) is the person motivation to comply, \(n\) is used for the salient referents (Ajzen, 1991, p. 195).

**Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)**

TPB is an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). TRA model has limitations in dealing with behaviors when people have incomplete volitional control (Ajzen, 1991, p. 181).

![Theory of Planned Behavior](image)

**Figure 4: Theory of Planned Behavior.** Adapted from *the theory of planned behavior* (p. 182), by Ajzen, (1991).
Control Beliefs and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)

According to Ajzen (1991, pp. 183,184) perceived behavioral control is playing an important role for the theory of planned behavior. Ajzen commented that “perceived behavioral control refers to people’s perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior of interest”. Perceived behavioral control can vary depending on situations and actions. For instance, a person may believe that he can achieve this task easily, so his perceived behavioral control will be determined by his set of control beliefs. Several studies reported that “people’s behavior is strongly influenced by their confidence in their ability to perform it (i.e., by perceived behavioral control)” perceived behavioral control may be unrealistic when people have little information about their behavior.

The equation of PBC

\[ PBC = \sum_{i=1}^{n} c_{i} p_{i} \]

In the equation, PBC is the control beliefs and perceived behavioral Control. \((c_{i})\) is used for control beliefs, and \((p_{i})\) is used for perceived power of the control factor. \(n\) is used for the salient control beliefs (Ajzen, 1991, p. 197).

Ryan & Bonfield (1975, p. 118) commented that the extended Fishbein model is popular among consumer researchers because of its three important reasons. First, the model provides a basis to understand attitude and normative influence relative to behavior. Second, the model is important for an easy explanation and prediction of consumer behavior for applying behavioral intentions as a mediator. Third, the model has reasoned empirical supports. On the other hand, Warshaw (1980, p. 153) commented that the model often make weak and inconsistent predictions in marketing applications. However, Ajzen (1991, p.188) mentioned that “the relative importance of attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control in the prediction of intention is expected to vary across behaviors and situations”.

Background Factors

According to TPB, we can understand the major determinants of intentions and behavior by studying behavioral, normative, and control beliefs. Similarly, other background factors may be related to understand intentions. An individual grow up in different social environments can acquire different information from a variety of sources. Subsequently, an individual builds up his or her beliefs on the basis of gathered information. There are many variables may influence the beliefs people hold. For example, age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, education, nationality, religious affiliation, personality, mood, etc. The evidence suggest that there is no connection between peoples’ belief and background factors. Still background factors may influence behavioral, normative or control beliefs. Ajzen commented even though many background factors can guide the theory, still it is difficult to know which are relevant for that particular study (Ajzen,2005, p. 134).
For our study, we have considered two background factors: **Environmental Knowledge** (discussed in the problem discussion part) and **Education**. We assume that these two background factors may be related to young people’s beliefs.

Educational establishments are important for building attitudes, activity levels, and knowledge of nature and the environment. A study by Tikka et al., (2000) on educational establishments found that childhood experiences influence the choice of education. Their study found that engineer students show negative attitudes toward environment, and biology students represent positive attitudes toward environment. However, authors also claimed that an educational establishment is not the absolute predictor of attitudes, behaviors, and acquisition of knowledge.

Numerous studies have attempted to explain that consumers having higher levels of education show positive attitude toward environment, so they can understand social problems of the society. Thus, they can act in an ecological manner toward environment. Studies also found that high income groups show positive attitude toward environment because of having higher levels of education (Berkowitz & Lutterman 1968; Henion 1972). However, the study of Samdahl & Robertson (1989) did not support the fact, they pointed out ecological conscious consumers are less educated.

![Figure 5: The role of background factors in the theory of planned behavior.](image)

*Figure 5: The role of background factors in the theory of planned behavior.* Adapted from *Attitudes, personality and behavior* (p. 135), Ajzen, I. (2005), Maidenhead: Open University Press.
CHAPTER THREE

3. METHODOLOGY

This Chapter will explore the research process regarding contextual factors affecting young consumers’ attitudes, and their intentions of green purchase behavior. The methodological assumptions will clarify the use of ontology and epistemology. In addition, this chapter will explore assumptions related with the research question. The research philosophy will adopt some important assumptions about the way we are viewing the world. Two major important ways of thinking generally impact the research philosophy: epistemology and ontology. These assumptions will underpin the research strategy, and the methods (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 108).

3.1 Choice of Topic

The choice of topic was based on our previously acquired knowledge in the field of marketing. Furthermore, we are inspired to work in the area of consumer behavior and consumers’ attitudes from our prior completed courses. At the beginning of our research, we are having a wide range of viewpoints. Finally, we followed this approach to find a suitable research problem.

Figure 6: Formulation of the research problem. Adapted from Essentials of social science research methodology (p. 65). Rasmussen et al.,(2006).
3.2 Choice of Theory

To answer the research question, we have studied two important theories. After the literature search, we have decided to use these two theories for our study; the theory of planned behavior (TPB), by Martin Fishbein, and Icek Ajzen, and the theory of reasoned action by Ajzen. We have decided to use these theories as we have found strong connections for answering our research question.

People act many different roles in their daily life, and they may change their consumption decisions according to their own styles. In addition, people’s evaluation of products and services are different from one another as they play many roles in the society (Solomon et al., 2010, p. 6). Therefore, we have decided to narrow our focus; we are studying green purchase behavior of young consumers. A study reported by Asia’s Media and Marketing (1993, cited in Tai & Tam, 1997, p. 290) showed that “the biggest change in consumer attitudes among the Hong Kong Chinese could be seen in the younger generation”.

3.3 Preconceptions

We are both Bangladeshi and non native English speakers. We speak the same language, and we have been completed higher secondary school certificate from the same educational system. However, our preconceptions, backgrounds, childhood, experiences are different. We have been brought up differently, and are from different districts in Bangladesh. According to Malterud (2001, p. 484), “identifying preconceptions brought into the project by the researcher, representing previous personal and professional experiences, presstudy beliefs about how things are and what is to be investigated, motivation and qualifications for exploration of the field, and perspectives and theoretical foundations related to education and interests”. Therefore, we consider that it is important to discuss our preconceptions in this chapter.

At the beginning of our research, it was really tough to decide on which topic we are going to investigate and how to present that topic in attractive manner. By reading articles, we have revealed that “green purchase behavior” is a broad area to discover. In addition, we want to work on a topic where other researchers have given little attention. Indeed, the research seems to be complicated because of our different thought processes and decisions. Finally, we manage to negotiate our differences in preconceptions.

We both have a strong background in Marketing. We completed our Bachelor of Business Administration in the field of Marketing. Previously, we also worked for research firms in Bangladesh. Currently, we are studying our master program in marketing at Umeå school of business. We strongly believe that these preconceptions will influence in our way of thinking, understanding and analyzing concepts and theories in this thesis.

During the literature search, we found the importance of Theory of Planned Behavior and Theory of Reasoned Action. In addition, we studied Theory of Planned Behavior from our prior completed courses. By reading articles, we collected sufficient details about our chosen theories.
Finally, we consider that we have tried to negotiate about our differences in preconceptions. We also acknowledge that our different views of writing process will reflect the whole research process. Therefore, we tried to be more careful in the whole research process.

### 3.4 Research Philosophy

The choice of research philosophy will be influenced by our preconceptions. The choices are to be based on the theory. In this thesis, we want to investigate two questions: (1) What are the contextual factors affecting young consumers’ attitudes, and (2) their intentions of green purchase behavior. We want to find the answers of these questions with the use of Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). According to Johnson & Clark (2006, cited in Saunders et al., 2009, p. 108), a researcher should pay attention on the philosophical choices as they can defend their philosophy in relation to the alternatives they have adopted in the research process.

#### 3.4.1 Epistemology Orientation

According to Saunders et al., (2009, pp. 112-116), epistemology is concerned about the representation of acceptable knowledge in a field of study. There are two approaches of epistemology: Interpretivism and Positivism. The objective of Interpretivism is to understand differences between humans in their role as social actors. An interpretivist pays attention to people rather than objects. Saunders et al., (2009) identified two researcher’s views what researchers consider as acceptable knowledge in their study. The first type of researcher is said resource research who considers data on resources needed is likely to be more akin to the position of the natural scientist. On the other hand, feeling researchers are more concerned with the feelings and attitudes of the social actors. Resource researchers have less authority on data collection process and they are objective oriented, so they are less biased on their data collection process. We are considering us as resource researchers. In this thesis by strengthening a positivist position, this study will be objective oriented and value free (Darlaston-Jones, 2007, p. 20). We expect the collected data will answer the research question thoroughly.

#### 3.4.2 Ontological Orientation

Ontology is concerned about the reality of the natural world. For our ontological assumptions, we have decided to see the social world with the point of view of the objectivism rather than with the view of constructionism. There are two main aspects of Ontology: Constructionism and Objectivism. The objective of social constructionism is to focus on the subjective meanings that motivate the actions of social actors in order for researchers can understand these actions. Another aspect of ontology is Objectivism; it stands for the position that social entities exist in reality external to social actors (Saunders et al., 2009, pp. 110-111). In this thesis, we are taking the position of objectivist as we want to avoid response errors that may occur when respondents distort their answers and true thoughts intentionally or unintentionally. For example, in a study Alwitt & Berger’s (1993) found consumers show high levels of concern for the environment, but their attitudes are
not consistent at the time of consuming products and services. Hence, we are not conducting the study from the subjective point of view.

In short, we are taking the position of positivism and objectivism aspects.

3.5 Research Approach

There are two important research approaches: Deductive approach and Inductive approach. Deduction is the dominant research approach that provides in the high degree of control in the process of data. It is the high level of objectivity approach that appears less convincing when one element of subjectivity in the choice of questions (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 125). However, another important approach is inductive approach which is concerned with the context in which such events are taking place. The study of a small sample of subjects is more appropriate for the inductive study (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 126).

In this thesis, the deductive research strategy will be used to strengthen our ontological, objectivism, and epistemological, Positivism. An additional important feature of deduction approach is that the concepts are to be operationalised in a way that enables facts to be measured quantitatively (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 125). However, we will not conduct the study based on existing hypotheses or new hypotheses. We consider this study will be more valuable if you can answer the research question from a marketer’s perspectives. In addition, we can see that the study is more explanatory. If we investigate the research question based on hypotheses, the interpretation from findings will not expose broadly. On the other hand, we want to investigate the research question at a broader perspective that will be useful for both marketers and other practitioners. In addition, we want to interpret our findings and results in a way that will increase the reliability and validity of the study. Furthermore, we will collect statistical data through questionnaires. According to Blaxter et al., (2006, p. 60), the aims of positivist research is to capture the reality of social world through questionnaire. Finally, the collected data will be interpreted through the use of the SPSS program.

3.6 Research Method

Data collection is essential for conducting a research. There are number of ways to collect data. Two broad categories are Qualitative and Quantitative data collection methods. Qualitative data collection method is more concerned with words rather than numbers (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 402). Robson commented that qualitative data are also characterized by its richness and fullness to explore a subject in a real manner (2002, cited in Saunders et al., 2009, p. 482). On the other hand, quantitative research method is more concerned with numerical data. It’s main objective is to make a relationship between theory and research as deductive, a predilection for natural science approach (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 154). Generally, these are the main steps to conduct our quantitative research.
3.7 Research Design

The aim of this thesis is to identify contextual factors affecting young consumers’ attitudes and their intentions of green purchase behavior, so the nature of this study is exploratory. According to Robson, an exploratory study is useful for understanding a problem. Hence, in this study we will identify the variables to understand young consumer’s attitudes and their intentions of buying green products (2002, cited in Saunders et al., 2009, p. 139).

In general, the survey strategy is used for exploratory research. As our study is associated with the deductive approach, we will conduct the survey strategy. This strategy will allow us to collect quantitative data, and we will use these data to analyze descriptive and inferential statistics (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 144).

Figure 7: The process of quantitative research. Adapted from *business research methods* (p. 155) by Bryman & Bell, (2007).
3.8 Criticism for Secondary Sources of Data

For conducting the thesis work, we collected most of our information from scientific articles, journals, books, and magazines, etc. We used Umeå University database as a primarily source of data provider. In addition, we used several sources of well known scientific data provider such as Business Source Premier (EBSCO), British Library, Thomson Reuters, Web of Science, Science Direct, Emerald Full text etc. For the ease of finding relevant articles we used Google Scholar (http://scholar.google.com). To maintain the quality of our work, we tried our best to use original sources as far as possible. In our information search process, previous books from consumer behavior and marketing research were also useful for this study. We utilized Umeå University Library for collecting books. In addition, we used the original books of Ajzen & Fishbein (1980) named “Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behavior” and “Attitudes, Personality and Behavior” by Ajzen (2005) to get an idea of TPB theory. We also collected and conceptualized the theory from the original articles written by Icek Ajzen. Furthermore, we took a great help from the article of Kaman Lee (2011) which was relevant to our research topic. For the collection of articles search process, we used some keywords. We used the term: green environment, green purchase behavior, green product, purchase intentions, etc.
Finally, we tried to provide all of our information from the authentic and reliable sources. We used the sources of journals that are highly reputed and internationally recognized. We tried our best to minimize errors that may arise from secondary data sources.

3.9 Selection of Data Sources

As this study is low budget study, the data will be collected from one source. We have decided to collect data from Umeå University students where the student component will provide a significant proportion of young people. Due to time constraint, we consider it is convenient to collect primary data from our nearest source.

3.10 Data Collection

In this study, we collected secondary data on various important topics. For example, we studied about consumer socialization to know how young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes in the market-place. To increase knowledge on TPB and TRA, we studied theories from the original sources. In addition, Google scholar (www.gooogle scholar.com) was useful for finding out relevant articles easily. We collected scientific articles from Umeå University database named Samsök. In fact, we collected books from other libraries in Sweden. For primary data, paper based questionnaires were used (see section 3.13 for further details).

3.11 Criticism against Collected Data

According to Bryman & Bell (2007, p. 204) the sources of error in social survey research are (1) Sampling error, (2) Non sampling error, (3) Data collection error, and (4) Data processing error. In our study, we have tried to avoid these sources of error to make the sample representative. Before conducting the survey, we ensured that our target sample is a student portion, and they are either a bachelor or master student. After conducting survey, we carefully input the data into SPSS program. In fact, every questionnaire was given unique number to indentify each respondent. SPSS tools used for analyzing are rechecked several occasions.

3.12 Pilot Test

We also completed the pilot test to improve the questionnaire. We completed the pilot test for the questionnaire in a day where ten respondents are asked to give their opinions regarding problems they have faced while reading or understanding the questionnaire. The test sample age group was between 19-30 years old. The sample did not recommend any suggestions regarding further improvements. After that, we conducted the final survey during the first week of May.
3.13 Sampling Procedures

We have used the student sample to collect quantitative data from questionnaires. According to Shiu et al., (2009, p. 449) it is expected that selection of a small number of elements from a larger defined group of elements will provide accurate judgments to be made about the larger group. In this study, the sample for questionnaires was based on non-probability sampling technique named convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is the easiest way to collect data, and the selection process for required sample size can make until the sample size is ready for the analysis (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 241). The criteria’s were that we wanted to have samples of young people studying bachelor or master program with ages 19 to 30 or 31 plus. We aimed for a sample of 300 young people.

There are a total of 30333 students, 18644 women and 11689 in the academic year 2010/11 at Umeå University (Stenwall, H. personal communication, May 13, 2011). We handed out 300 questionnaires to students at Umeå University. We let the respondents fill up the questionnaires without any assistance from our side. We ensured that we had no influence on their choices. We were unable to collect 18 unfulfilled questionnaires. In total we handed out 300 questionnaires, we have got a sample of 282. We had a response rate of 94 percent. Out of 282 students, we had a sample of 141 men and 141 women. We divided the population into two specific groups: male and female. We collected equal responses in each quota for our statistical analyses. We have established certain categories (or strata) in order to represent the population. Thus, this collected sample also represents the characteristics of a type of quota sampling that is entirely non-random and represents on very similar principles to stratified sampling. Moreover, we have chosen this sampling technique as it is less costly and can be obtained quickly (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 235).
4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, we will interpret the primary data that was collected from our survey. The results from the survey will answer the research question. We will analyze the results by using the functions in the SPSS program. In addition, we will prepare the SPSS results in accordance with the research question. Firstly, we will prepare the demographic results. Secondly, we will answer the research questions. The answer of the research question will be divided into two parts: In the first part, we will identify the contextual factors affecting young consumer attitudes. In the second part, we will study the intentions of young consumers toward green products with the theory of planned behavior.

4.1 Questionnaire Constructs

The questionnaire method is useful for primary data collection. We have used Ajzen’s (2006) ‘Constructing a theory of planned behavior questionnaire’ to address the research problem within the framework of TPB. In this study, we have formulated direct measures to address the research question. We have chosen Ajzen’s (2006, pp. 5-7) TPB questionnaire construction because of its high degree of internal consistency. In addition, we have added other items in the questionnaire that are relevant for this study. We have used Likert Scale for preparing the questionnaire. This Likert scale helps to indicate to what extent respondents either agree or disagree with a series of belief statements about a given object (Shiu et al., 2009, p. 421). We have developed a questionnaire construct to answer the research question. Table 1 shows a questionnaire construction for the SPSS analysis.
Table 1: Construct Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct Development</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contextual factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>I have learnt about environmentally-related topics and issues from my parents.</td>
<td>α = .75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My parents think that I should buy green products.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>My friends often discuss environmental related topics/issues.</td>
<td>α = .85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have learnt a lot about environmental topics/issues from my parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>I watch TV programs that are devoted to environmental topics/issues.</td>
<td>α = .75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I pay attention to environmental messages in advertisements.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I listen to Radio programs that are related to environmental topics/issues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theory of planned behavior</strong></td>
<td>I think green products are useful for health.</td>
<td>α = .66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I often buy green products.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude toward behavior</td>
<td>I have learnt about environmentally-related topics and issues from my parents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My parents think that I should buy green products.</td>
<td>α = .70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective norms</td>
<td>My friends often discuss environmental related topics/issues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have learnt a lot about environmental topics/issues from my friends.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived behavioral control (PBC)</td>
<td>Education is important for purchasing environmental friendly products.</td>
<td>α = .66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My knowledge of environmental issues influences my purchase decisions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contextual Factors**

**Parental influence**

Two items are developed to examine how respondents perceive parental influence on environment related issues (e.g., I have learnt about environmental related topics and issues form my parents). This scale yielded a reliability of α = .75
Peer influence

Two items are developed to measure how respondents perceive peer influence on environment related issues (e.g., I have learnt a lot about environmental topics/issues from my parents). This scale yielded a reliability of $\alpha=.85$

Media exposure to environmental messages

Two items are asked to mention how often they come across environment related messages from each of the sources: TV programs, advertisement and radio (e.g., I watch TV programs that are devoted to environmental topics/issues). This scale yielded a reliability of $\alpha=.75$

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

Attitude toward the behavior

Two items are developed to examine how young people’s attitude influence purchase intentions of green products (e.g., I think green products are useful for health). This scale yielded a reliability of $\alpha=.66$

Subjective norm

Four items are taken to consider how young people’s belief is influenced by others (e.g., My parents think that I should buy green products). This scale yielded a reliability of $\alpha=.70$

Perceived behavioral control

Two items are developed to understand how respondents think that factors that are important to perform a behavior. (e.g., Education is important for purchasing environmental friendly products). This scale yielded a reliability of $\alpha=.66$

4.2 Demographic Results

In this section we have presented the demographic variables respondents. We have collected the data in way that we can maintain equal proportion of male and female respondents. We analyzed these results with the help of SPSS software. The result shows the equal sample size of male and female respondents from our data collection.
Presenting at the figure 9, we tried to collect equal number of male and female respondents i.e. 50% of male and 50% of female.

Table 2: Demographical Information of Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demography</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-22</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-26</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-30</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31+</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9: Respondents’ male and female proportion.

Presenting at the figure 9, we tried to collect equal number of male and female respondents i.e. 50% of male and 50% of female.
4.3 Analyzing Young Consumers

Table 3: Descriptive Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Useful for health</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>5.58</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often buy green products</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn from parents</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents think I should buy green</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My friends often discuss</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learnt from friends</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch TV programs devoted to Environmental issues</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay attention to environmental Messages in advertisement</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen radio programs that are Related to environmental issues</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education is important</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>5.45</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of environmental Issues influence my purchase Decisions</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I intend to purchase</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This descriptive statistics table implies some important issues among young consumers’ overall evaluations of green products. We can see that average perception about the usefulness of green products for health is considered highest level of priority (Mean Value=...
5.57) in 7 point Likert scale. The second highest priority goes to the intentions to purchase (Mean Value=5.57) green product which is slightly differ from previous the factor. Thirdly, education is considered to be a favorable factor toward buying green products. On contrary to these factors, media exposures like radio and TV programs are not considered too much influential to young consumers’ buying intentions. From the Table 3, we can see that radio programs are considered to be less important (Mean Value=2.29). In addition, the Second lowest priority has given toward the role of parents for green buying behavior (Mean Value=3.39 & 3.44). TV programs are considered be little bit higher (Mean Value=3.64) in position to create intentions for buying green products among young consumers.

Table 4: Young Consumers' Purchase Intention of Green Products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative Attitude</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral Attitude</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Attitude</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>81.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11: Young consumer’s purchase intentions

To assess the purchase intentions of young consumers, question 12 (see appendix 1) is averaged in order to obtain intention score; it is done for every questionnaire. In order to obtain intention score from the 7 point Likert scale, we have divided the scale into three
different groups: scores ranging from 1 to 3.4 (negative intention); scores ranging from 3.5 to 4.5 (neutral intention); scores ranging from 4.6 to 7 (positive intention).

As shown in figure 11 young consumer’s purchase intentions of green products are presented. From the graph above we can see that majority of respondents have positive intentions toward purchasing green products. The response rate for positive intention was 81.56%. On the other hand, a minority of respondents (8.87%) have negative intention toward purchasing green products. In addition, we can see that a small number of respondents are also in neutral position amounting 9.57%.

Table 5: Analysis of ANOVA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test of Homogeneity of Variances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I intend to purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levene Statistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I intend to purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANOVA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I intend to purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum of Squares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>546.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>555.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A one-way between groups ANOVA was conducted to see the impact of age on intention to purchase green products. Respondents are classified into three groups according to their age (Group 1: 19 to 22; Group 2: 23-26; Group 3: 27-30, Group 4: 31 and above). There was no statistically significant difference at the P>.05 on intention to purchase green products for the three age groups [F (3,278)=1.5, p=.20]. It is apparent from Homogeneity of Variances table that we have not violated the assumption of homogeneity of variance. The significance value (sig) is greater than .05. However, from the mean plot, we can see that 31+ age group recorded the lowest intention for green products with the 27-30 year age group recording the highest.
As shown in Table 6, there are two tables: Group statistics table and the independent sample test table. From the group statistics table, we can see that 141 male and 141 female consumers. The mean purchase of green products for female is a bit higher at 3.90, compared to 3.67 for the male consumers. The standard deviation for females is somewhat higher (1.60) than for the males (1.47). From the Levene’s test for equality of variances, we also can see that sig. value (.67) larger than .05. In this case, we have found that two variances are equal. From the column labeled sig. (2-tailed), it is not significant at .000. The result of the study did not show there is a difference between two groups. A possible explanation for this result might be the small sample size for the study. Our anticipated finding was that there must be difference between two groups. But statistically, we have no evidence showing that the frequency of purchase green products differs between male and female consumers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Often buy green products</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: t-test for group statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Often buy green products</th>
<th>Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>-1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-1.28</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>277.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4 Analysis

4.4.1 Contextual Factors Affecting Young Consumers’ Attitudes

The first part of the research question is explained in table 7, table 8, table 9, and table 10. First, we have given a description of the results. Second, an interpretation of the result is presented. Finally, we answer the research question.

To measure the strength of the relationships between two variables, we have used Pearson’s R in SPSS. Pearson’s R can range from -1 to +1. A Positive Correlation indicates that one variable increases so does the other. A negative correlation indicates that one increases, the other decreases.

Table 7: Correlation between parents and attitude

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Attitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation 1</td>
<td>.412**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation .412**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Presenting at Table 7, the relationship between parental influence and attitudes of young consumers was investigated using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. There was a strong positive correlation between the two variables \[ r = .41, n=282, p<.01 \], with high level of parental influence with high level of attitudes toward green purchase. The significance level is at .000.

Table 8: Correlation between peer and attitude

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Peer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation 1</td>
<td>.379**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation .379**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
From the table 8, we can see that peer and attitude have a correlation coefficient of .379. There was a strong positive correlation between peer influence and attitude \([r = .379, n=282, p<.01]\), with high level of peer influence with high level of attitude toward green products. This result is significant at .000.

### Table 9: Correlation between media and attitude

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Media</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.261**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sig. (2-tailed)</strong></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>282</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Presented in Table 9, are the correlations between young consumers’ attitude toward media. Looking at the correlation coefficient for media and attitude, we can see that the correlation coefficient of media and attitude is .261. There was a strong positive correlation between the two variables \([r = .261, n=282, p<.01]\), with the significance level at .000.

### Table 10: Correlation between knowledge and attitude

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.553**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sig. (2-tailed)</strong></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>282</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the table 10, we can see that the correlation between young people environmental knowledge and attitude. Pearson’s R in SPSS is used again to measure the strength of the relationships between knowledge and attitude. From the table, we can see that these two
variables are highly correlated with a correlation coefficient of .553. The result is significant at .000, indicating a perfect relationship exists.

To see relationship between contextual factors (media exposure to environmental messages, parental influence, and peer influence) and the attitudes of young consumers toward green products, we have conducted correlation analysis. It denotes that the higher correlation exists between contextual factors and attitudes. So to answer the question: what are the contextual factors affecting young consumer attitudes toward green products; we just can see from the tables 7, 8, 9, and 10. In our study we have found that parental influence and young consumer attitudes have the highest positive correlation at .412 and therefore have the strongest relationship.

4.4.2 Theory of Planned Behavior

Table 11: Correlation between subjective norm and intention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjective norm</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Subjective norm</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>.457**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>282</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i intend to purchase</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th></th>
<th>.457**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>282</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As shown in table 11, there was a significant positive correlation between subjective norms and purchase intentions of buying green products. There was a significant correlation between the two variables \( r = .457, n=282, p<.01 \), with high level of normative influences increasing high level of intention toward buying green products. The result is significant at .000.
The results, as shown in table 12, indicate that a positive correlation is found between PBC and intention. There was a strong positive correlation between the two variables \([r = .59, n=282, p<.01]\), with high level of PBC (Education and Knowledge) facilitating the intention of young people. This result is significant at .000.

**Table 12: Correlation between PBC and intention**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PBC</th>
<th>i intend to purchase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PBC</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.590**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i intend to purchase</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.590**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

As can be seen from the table 13 above there is a significant positive correlation between attitude and intention \([r = .639, n=282, p<.01]\). The correlation between these two variables is statistically significant, and it is representing a perfect relationship. The value is positive, and it is very close to +1. The significance level is at .000.

**Table 13: Correlation between attitude and intention**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>i intend to purchase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.639**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i intend to purchase</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.639**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

From the tables 11, 12 and 13 we can see that the elements of TPB have strong influence on intention. The most striking result to emerge from the data is that all the correlation results are positive. In our study we have found that young people have positive attitude toward...
green purchase. The correlations between attitude and intention have the highest positive correlation at .639 and therefore have the strongest relationship.
CHAPTER FIVE

5. DISCUSSION

In this chapter, we will analyze the results and findings in connection with the theoretical framework. In the first part, we will discuss about the contextual factors affecting young consumers’ attitudes. In the second part, we will explain young consumers’ intentions of buying green products with the use of TPB.

5.1 Contextual Factors and Young Consumers’ Attitudes

Recent evidence suggests that contextual factors are important in green purchase decisions. Tikka et al., (2000) first commented that contextual factors influence an individual’s thinking, and what an individual do, feel or think. Initially, Tikka et al., (2000) considered the importance of contextual factors when analyzing environment behavior. Subsequently, other researchers have considered the relationship between contextual factors and behavior (Lee 2011; Young et al., 2010; Tanner et al., 2004; Olli et al., 2001).

Lee (2011) conceptualized a framework of Hong Kong adolescents where three contextual factors were investigated: (1) Parental influence, (2) Peer influence, and (3) Media exposure to environmental message. In our study, we have also investigated these factors, and an additional background factor (environmental knowledge) is taken into consideration to understand attitudes of young consumers towards green products. According to Ajzen (2005), background factors may be related to understand intentions, but these factors have no connection with people’s belief. Still background factors may influence the behavior (Ajzen, 2005, p. 134).

From our findings, the correlation analyses show that parental influence is the top predictor among all of the variables we have studied. However, the findings of the current study do not support the previous research. The study made by Lee (2011) found that Hong Kong parents have less influence on their children green purchase. Comparing the two results, we can see that Hong Kong parents may not influence much in facilitating contextual environments that encourage green behavior of young adolescents. Probably, green purchase is a new concept to older generation in Hong Kong (Lee, 2011, p. 32).

The present study finds that parental influence is the top predictor among all the variables. We can see parental influence is a socialization factor in adolescent stage, and the consumption habits of a parent, their attitudes and their intentions to buy product strongly influence the consumption pattern of young adolescent people. In addition, a young adult adopts the same and similar behavior that their parents’ maintain in their style and socialization process (Chaplin & John, 2010, p. 176; Cotte & Wood, 2004, p. 84).

In this study, peer influence is the second most important factor in facilitating green purchase behavior. We consider that relationship is a dominant factor for adolescents’ decision making, and the relationship among adolescents that formed in early childhood
considered as weak. The relationships in adolescent stage become more influential, intimate, and strong (Berndt 1982; John 1999). And we can also see that our findings are strengthened by Lee’s findings on peer influence.

In our study, we have considered that environmental knowledge is an important background factor that facilitates purchase intentions of young people. The findings suggest that environment knowledge is a strong predictor in understanding purchase intentions of green products. Previous studies have also reported that students studying to environmental courses demonstrated an increase in responsible environmental behavior and an increased awareness of environmental issues (Jaus, 1984; Jordan et al., 1986; Ramsey & Rickson 1976; Ramsey, 1993).

Media exposures to environmental messages exert less influence in young people’s intentions of buying green products, and our findings also consistent with Lee’s findings. However, other studies reported that media exposures are found to be influential in other cultural groups (Holbert et al., 2003).

To further understand how to the top three predictors, namely, environmental knowledge, parents, and peers facilitate green purchase intentions of young people, a model is proposed.

![Figure 12: The proposed model](image)

From the figure above, we can see that young people can be influenced by three factors. In this proposed flowchart path 1, path 2 and path 3 indicates the most influential factors for green purchase intentions of young consumers. Our analysis of research shows knowledge (path 1) plays the strongest role for developing positive intentions toward green products among young consumers. The second most prominent factor in favor of creating young consumers’ purchase intentions for green products is parental influence (path 2). And peer influence (path 3) is the third most important factor for increasing green purchase intentions among young consumers.
5.2 Theory of Planned Behavior

Human behavior is complex, and it is also difficult to understand. The objective of theory of planned behavior is to understand human behavior in specific contexts. A central factor of theory of planned behavior is to understand an individual’s intention to perform a given behavior. Ajzen commented that “intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence the behavior” (Ajzen, 1991, pp. 180-181). In our study, we investigated the context of young peoples’ intentions of buying green products.

***Figure 13: Theory of Planned Behavior.*** Adapted from the *theory of planned behavior* (p. 182), by Ajzen, (1991).

**Attitude toward a behavior**

An individual’s beliefs determine attitudes toward an object. An individual form an attitude toward an object by knowing various characteristics, qualities, and attributes. Indeed, an individual believes the objects that have positive characteristics. On contrary, an individual can form negative attitudes if objects have negative characteristics (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980, pp. 62-63). Therefore, we can say that characteristics of an object are important factors for understanding an attitude. In our survey study respondents are asked about green products, Do they think green products are useful for health? Our study found that respondents have positive attitude toward green products. After conducting correlation analysis between attitude and intention (see table 13), we have found that young people have positive attitude toward green products. Therefore, findings show that positive attitudes can increase intentions of buying green products.
Subjective norms

In general, young people are influenced by social network (e.g. family, friends, coworker, etc.). Initially, they collect information from their social network to buy a particular brand (Feick et al., 2003). Subjective norm is the function of normative beliefs where individuals want feedback from others to perform (not perform) a behavior. In our study, we have employed important contextual factors (parents & peer) to understand young people purchase intentions of buying green products. We asked respondents, do you learn environment related issues from your parents, friends? Our study found that there is a strong relationship between these factors and their intentions of buying green products. From the correlation analyses, we have found strong positive relationship between subjective norm and intention (see table 11).

Perceived behavioral control (PBC)

Ajzen (1991) commented that “perceived behavioral control refers to people’s perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior of interest”. It can also be unrealistic when a person has relatively little information (Ajzen, 1991, p. 185). Hence, we established two important factors to understand young peoples’ perception of the ease of purchasing green products: Education and Knowledge. We draw attention to these factors if young people find these factors are important to perform the behavior. In our study we have found strong correlations between these factors and intention (see table 12).

Therefore, we can conclude that our findings are strongly supported by the use of TPB. To sum up, our interpretation of the TPB model

![Figure 14: Our interpretation of the TPB model.](image)
CHAPTER SIX

6. CONCLUSION

The idea of green marketing first initiated its journey near about two decades ago. The main theme of green marketing is to provide environmentally friendly products to consumers. Marketers are struggling to cope up with their consumers by means of producing quality products. There can be no doubt that the consumers’ of 21st century are now much more conscious and knowledgeable about health and environment related concerns. Indeed, the consumers’ of this decade are more promising and highly potential, especially young consumers.

The evidence suggest that young people can be a lucrative market to international green marketers because of the following reasons. First, young consumers become more interested to accept new and innovative ideas. Second, they are becoming more conscious and knowledgeable about environmental impact on earth. Third, they have the power to influence on their peer group (Caruana & Vassallo, 2003; Lee, 2011). Therefore, in this thesis we have investigated three contextual variables to understand this segment.

Contextual factors affect young consumers’ intention development and attitude formation. Our present study shows that three contextual factors are facilitating young peoples’ intention toward green purchase. We think marketers should devote their attention to the segments of parents and new couple (i.e. married person, living together) and disseminate the information about the importance of using green products in order to develop favorable attitude toward environment. The findings also suggest that importance of peer group influence acts as an agent that can form favorable attitude toward green products.

Thus, marketers should strive to encourage young consumers to buy product with their peer groups. In addition, marketers can prepare efficient market campaigns in order to capture the attention of young consumers and encourage them to convey important information with their peer groups. In this study, we also can see that education and knowledge act as potential background factors for young consumers’ attitude formation, so marketers should deliver positive and emotional appeals to educate young consumers’ product preferences. In addition, marketers can take initiatives to increase knowledge building activities like forest camp, field trips, tree plantation, etc.

In conclusion, the most interesting findings in our study are related to education and knowledge. In this study we have found that education and environmental knowledge are strong predictors of buying green products. From the empirical findings, we can see that there has been a rise intention to buy green products, especially in the 27–30 age group. Thus, international green marketers should target this segment (27-30 age group) with knowledge building activities.

Finally, we consider that our findings are strengthened by the use of Theory of Planned Behavior and answered the research question thoroughly.
6.1 Managerial Implications

Young consumers’ attitude toward a product is always very important issues for marketers. Marketers are able to prepare different marketing strategy and stimuli for successful product development and its implementation depending upon the consumers’ attitudes. Our findings about the contextual factors that affect young consumers’ attitude of buying green products will certainly give some new venues for rethinking of green marketing. This study shows young consumers’ purchase intentions are quite good and 81.56 percent of them are interested in buying green products.

Even though the response rate is quite high, we will point out that young people’s intention do not predict that they will perform the behavior. Therefore, marketers need to develop efficient campaigns to motivate young people. To sum up, marketers should keep in mind that higher motivation is needed to come into effect toward attitude an object (Solomon et al., 2010, p. 277). Thus, marketers should initially educate young consumers’ through their advertisements and awareness program why green products are important to buy and to change their attitude accordingly.

Furthermore, in our findings we observe the relationships among contextual factors affect consumers’ attitude formation. Our finding also indicates a strong correlation exists between young consumer’s purchase intentions and PBC/Subjective norms. From the findings of PBC and subjective norms we can get a clear picture that knowledge and education are considered major influential background factors for building positive attitude among young consumers. Therefore, marketers should devote their attention to educate young consumers through different knowledge building activities. For example, marketers can provide products for free trial, and can arrange knowledge building competition for innovative ideas.

6.2 Theoretical Implications

The present study is an exploratory research that examines the contextual factors affecting young consumers’ attitudes and their intentions of buying green products. In this thesis, we investigated three important contextual factors: (1) media exposure (2) parental influence, and (3) peer influence to understand young consumers’ purchase intentions of buying green products. The study explored that parental influence is the top predictor among all three variables. The findings suggest that peer influence and parental influence are strongly correlated with the purchase intention of buying green products. In addition, in this study we included two background factors (education and knowledge) to understand young consumers’ green purchase intentions.

This study implies a connection between contextual factors and two other background factors to examine a better understanding of young consumers’ purchase intention of
buying green products. We can see that education and knowledge are playing a significant role in shaping green purchase intention of young people.

Lastly, by adding *education* and *knowledge*, this study provides new paradigms into the existing conceptualization of understanding young consumers’ green purchase behavior.

**6.3 Further Research**

In this study we adopted a quantitative study to understand young consumers’ purchase intention of buying green products. The quantitative research method is used to examine the relationship between variables and purchase intention of buying green products, but this method is lack of identifying the underlying reasons to justify the phenomenon. We consider that the use of triangulation method can give a complete picture and a better understanding of young consumers’ green purchase behavior.
CHAPTER SEVEN

7. THE CREDIBILITY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

There are three important concepts that are used to evaluate the quality of a study. The concepts are reliability, validity, and generalisability (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 156).

Reliability

According to Saunders et al. (2009, p. 156) reliability is concerned with data collection techniques or procedures that are used to yield consistent findings. The objective of a positivist orientation is to minimize errors.

First of all, we consider that we have conducted the study with an appropriate sample, and we wanted to have a sample of young people. Finally, we decided to collect the sample from Umeå University, Sweden where student portions are young. In this study, a structured survey method was used to collect data from students, and it is ensured that students are eager to participate in this study. In our study, we tried to reduce participants’ errors by ensuring that questionnaires completed at different times would not produce different results. Only interested students were included in this study, and we also tried to ensure that students were not busy while filling the questionnaires.

In this study, we also tried our best to use more reliable secondary resources. For example, we used original articles and books. In addition, we followed a structured method to collect and analyze data. For example, we used SPSS Program to process the data accurately. We hope other researchers using the findings will produce consistent results.

It is still important to say that people’s attitudes are not stagnant, so today’s research findings will not be same in the future. Even though the findings of this study are reliable and usable, researchers still should be more careful in applying to other similar settings.

Validity

Validity deals with research methods, approaches and techniques that are exploring in the study (Blaxter et al., 2006, p. 221). We directed this study to a better understanding of important concepts and theories, so we invested enough time to construct the research. In addition, in this paper arguments are presented clearly. We think that respondents understood the concepts we tried to address them.

Generalisability

Generalisability is also called external validity. The main concern of generalisability is to ensure that the findings of the study are generalisable to other research settings. We consider that the research process is well structured. We consider this study is also replicated to similar settings. If we consider the transferability of the research, researchers
should be careful in applying because there is still a risk that the sample might not be representative.
Reference List


**PERSONAL COMMUNICATION**

Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Survey on purchasing green products

Hello! We are Master students at Umeå School of Business. This questionnaire is designed to understand young consumers’ purchase intentions of green products. Green products are environmentally safe and preferable products and services (e.g. organic tea, energy saving bulb, green car).

Your honest opinion is extremely valuable for completing this survey. Please complete the questionnaire; it will take only a few minutes. The information you provide will be confidential and will not be used for any other purposes. Please indicate your answer by circling or giving tick mark. Please choose only one answer per question.

Select your Gender

☐ Male  ☐ Female

Educational Status

☐ Student of Bachelor’s program
☐ Student of Master’s Program

Age

☐ 19-22
☐ 23-26
☐ 27-30
☐ 31 +

1. I think green products are useful for health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. I often buy green products.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. I have learnt about environmentally-related topics and issues from my parents.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | Strongly Agree | 7 |

4. My parents think that I should buy green products.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | Strongly Agree | 7 |

5. My friends often discuss environmental related topics/issues.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | Strongly Agree | 7 |

6. I have learnt a lot about environmental topics/issues from my friends.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | Strongly Agree | 7 |

7. I watch TV programs that are devoted to environmental topics/issues.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | Strongly Agree | 7 |

8. I pay attention to environmental messages in advertisements.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | Strongly Agree | 7 |

9. I listen to Radio programs that are related to environmental topics/issues.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | Strongly Agree | 7 |

10. Education is important for purchasing environmental friendly products.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 2 3 4 5 6 | Strongly Agree | 7 |
11. My knowledge of environmental issues influences my purchase decisions.

| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Strongly Agree | 7 |

12. I intend to purchase green products in the future.

| Extremely unlikely | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Extremely likely | 7 |

Thank you for your participation