

# ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES

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## ABSTRACT

Social media has become an important tool for spreading knowledge and awareness on various subjects. People are using social media for gaining knowledge as well. Similarly people are using social media for spreading and gaining knowledge about environmental related concern. Environmental concern has become popular term with the growing world. This research provides a brief review about uses of social media for spreading environmental awareness and further how these environmental concern helps in identifying the green purchase behaviour of the consumers. For this study, 250 questionnaires were distributed among the respondents and 205 submitted their response. Linear regression was applied for an analysis of study. The results of the study show that there is significant effect of social media on environmental awareness and environmental awareness on green purchase behaviour. It means social media helps in spreading awareness of environmental issue and concern among individual and this awareness subsequently leads to purchase of green product. Research study is concluded with limitation further scope of study.

**Keywords:** Green purchase behaviour; Environmental awareness and concern; Social media usage; Environmental practices, Linear and Multiple Regression

## INTRODUCTION

Now technology is changing and becoming a major force in growing market. Day by day technologies have increased on global levels which have grasp customer interest as they are changing their behaviour and lifestyle. Technologies have changed the scenario for sustainability also by spreading awareness about it. Today growth of technology can be seen through growth of social media (Rust, Moorman, & Bhalla, 2010).

Social media refers to the interactions among people in which they share and/or exchange information, create content, spread awareness, connect with people and earn money in an online mode and also increases the network of communication. Various popular social networking giants like Google, Facebook and Twitter become a part of everyday life for millions of Indians. According to the report of statista (2021), 32.3% of people are active

on social media in India. In today's time, social media is playing the role of spreading and creating awareness among individuals and consumers.

Environmental awareness is a very unique term to study. It has several meanings. According to some authors, environmental awareness refers to the understanding of natural resources and how it helps to the society and according to few, to know the ways and intensity of environmental resources and how it is useful for the enhancement of cultural, economical and social value. Today awareness about environment is important because serious problems such as pollution, global warming and climate change are increasing with time (G, Anbalagan et al, 2015). Social media is fulfilling its responsibility of environmental awareness among citizens up to the mark.

Green purchase behaviour refers to the buying of environmentally friendly products or sustainable products which can be recycled and also can not harm the environment (Chan, 2001; Mostafa, 2007). It also refers to the decision making of purchasing green product by the consumers. It is a kind of socially responsible behaviour (Moisander, 2007). It may include whole process of production from raw material to final product. Social media which has become a new channel for sharing information can influence consumer green purchase behaviour by making them aware about environmental concerns of the society (Anvar & venter, 2014). The present study seeks to accomplish the influence of social media on environmental awareness and environmental awareness on green purchase behaviour and also to identify the effect of demographic factors on social media.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Social Media and Environmental awareness

Several studies have been conducted in this context. Social media has wholeheartedly and rapidly embraced environmental sector. Social media has become a channel of spreading awareness about environment campaigns. It also conveys information on major environmental issues such as moving away from fossil fuel dependence to renewable energy, changing dynamics of climatic conditions and effects of various natural calamities on people (world economic forum, 2016). As environmental awareness is growing so well the environmental concern. Now environmental concern is not only the duty of the government or companies but also of the whole society (Kotchen & Reiling, 2000).

In recent time, social media is used for the enhancement of natural environment in much faster way and also to large mass of audience in a short period of time. Social media has been used as a platform which allows public to involve in influencing and disagreeing on environmental decisions made by corporation or government which has the power to affect them (Warner, Eames & Irving, 2014). Social media also provide the facility of setting trend on current issue of environment and activism (Curtis et al., 2010). Now people are seeking for various websites of social media for primary source of news and information.

### Environmental awareness and Green Purchase Behaviour

Many studies shows positive relationship among ecological knowledge and green purchase behaviour (Grunert, 1993; Davis 1993). Some common green practices include

recycling, purchasing organic food, using less paper, saving electricity, avoiding aerosols and plastic bags (Gilg, Barr & Ford, 2005). Consumers are realising the negative and positive effect of their activity or behaviour on the environment and shifting their purchase habits more and more towards the green product and process and even are ready to pay more for it.

Green consumer avoids purchasing product which can cause harm to environment during the whole process of manufacturing to delivery of product. In the opinion of Aziz and Yani (2017), green purchase behaviour means not only satisfying consumers' needs and wants but also showing concern for environment and society. There is also a strong relationship between recycling and the purchase of recycled product (Biswas et al., 2000).

Chrysosoidis and Krystallis (2005) argued that buying of green product can influence

consumer lifestyle of living in a healthy way. Consumer who takes care of environment more often buy ecological product (Nam et al., 2007). Many studies have argued that green product is usually high in prices and high price have negative impact toward purchasing of green product by consumer (Gleim et al., 2013; Olsen et al., 2014). Some studies highlighted that this leads to greatest barrier in purchasing of green product (Connell et al., 2010; Gleim et al, 2014) but according to Díaz et al (2012), informed purchaser even gets ready to pay high prices for green product to save environment from negative impact. According to Aman et al. (2012) and Mostafa (2007), environment awareness leads to positive attitude toward green product and process which subsequently leads to green purchase behaviour. Some studies show there is a link between awareness and green purchase behaviour (Fu et al, 2013; Chan et al., 2000).



## OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The present study seeks to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To study the influence of social media on environmental awareness.
2. To identify the impact of environmental awareness on green purchase behaviour.

On the basis of available literature and conceptual framework, researcher has

developed the following hypotheses:

**H1:** Social Networks positively influence Environmental Awareness.

**H2:** Environmental Awareness positively influences Green Purchase Behaviour.

## METHODOLOGY

### Sample and Data Collection

A descriptive research design is used for this research paper. Collection of data and

information has been done through snowball sampling method. The study was based on primary data. A well framed questionnaire was distributed up to collect the information and data from the district of Western Uttar Pradesh. 250 questionnaires were distributed, out of those 205 submitted their response. The questionnaire consists of two sections. The questionnaire was designed with the items adapted from previous studies, social media, environmental awareness (Dellarmelin et al., 2018) and green purchasing behaviour (Arpita Khare and Suki et al.). Through the results of descriptive statistics,

it is observed that 65.9% females and 34.1% males were there in the survey. The age profile of the respondents reflects the majority of the respondents (75.2) were of 18-24 years of age, approximately 22% of the respondents were 25-31 years of age. 2.4% of the total respondents were 32-38 years of age.

### Analysis

To investigate influence of social media on environmental awareness and influence of environmental awareness on green purchasing behaviour, linear regression technique has been adopted.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### Regression

**Table 1: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.736a	.541	.539	2.101	.541	240.816	1	204	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media

b. Dependent Variable- Environmental Awareness

In this regression model, the value of R square is shown as 0.541 which means that 54.1% of the variables under the dimension social media contribute to the environmental awareness. Hence, green social media moderately correlates with environmental awareness.

**Table 2: ANOVAa**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1062.744	1	1062.744	240.816	.000b
	Residual	900.270	204	4.413		
	Total	1963.015	205			

a. Dependent Variable: E.A

b. Predictors: (Constant), S.M **It is quite evident that the p-value is .000 Therefore, while**

considering social media influence on environmental awareness, we can state that we will reject null hypotheses and accept an alternative hypothesis that is social media have an impact on the environmental awareness as the p-value is less than 0.05.

**Table 3: Coefficients**

Model	Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		T	Sig.	Hypothesis Results
		Beta	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)					
	S.M	SM →EA	.448	.029	15.518	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Environmental Awareness

In the above coefficient table, the value of unstandardized coefficients beta for social media is positive which means if 1 unit increases in social media, then environmental awareness may increase by .448 times. The value of beta for social media is 0.448 which depicts social media is the influential factors for customers in changing their environmental awareness of green product. As P value for social media is less than 0.05 which depicts that social media positively influence environmental awareness.

**Table 4: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.776a	.602	.600	1.811	.602	308.657	1	204	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), E.A

b. Dependent Variable: Green Purchasing Behaviour

In this regression model, the value of R square is shown as 0.602 which means that 60.2% of the variables under the dimension environmental awareness contribute to the green purchase behaviour. Hence, environmental awareness strongly correlates with green purchase behaviour.

**Table 5: ANOVAa**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1012.340	1	1012.340	308.657	.000b
	Residual	669.083	204	3.280		
	Total	1681.422	205			

a. Dependent Variable: E.A

b. Predictors: (Constant), E.A

It is quite evident that the p-value is .000 Therefore, while considering environmental awareness influence on green purchase behaviour, we can state that we will reject null hypotheses and accept an alternative hypothesis that is environmental awareness have an impact on the green purchase behaviour as the p-value is less than 0.05.

**Table 6: Coefficients**

Model		Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Hypothesis Results
			B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)		9.115	.886		10.289	.000	
	E.A	EA →GPB	.718	.041	.776	17.569	.000	H2:Supported

## RESULTS AND FINDINGS

This study examines the influence of social media on environmental awareness and also influence of environmental awareness on green buying behaviour. The results of regression of first hypothesis (SM→EA) depicts that social media positively influence environmental awareness as p value is less than 0.05 and also according to the value of R square social media is contributing 54.1% to environmental awareness. The results of regression of second hypothesis (EA→GPB) depicts that environmental awareness positively influence green buying behaviour as p value is less than 0.05 and also according to the value of R square environmental awareness is contributing 60.2% to green buying behaviour.

## CONCLUSION

Environmental issue and reduction of natural resources forced human resources to give attention on environmentally safe products. Now organisation are shifting their attention more towards environmental friendly product

and process which subsequently leads to increase in the customer interest to purchase green product (Kapur, 2016).

This research addresses that how social media leads to awareness about environment and how environmental awareness among individual leads to purchase of green products. Through this study it has also been concluded that there is significant effect of social media on environmental awareness and environmental awareness on green purchase behaviour. The finding (SM→EA) do meet the assumptions by Severo et al. (2019) and Rahim et al. (2016), which emphasize that social media is responsible for spreading awareness about environmental issues. Consumers use social media to have news and information, to improve their knowledge about environmental issue and awareness. The finding (EA→GPB) do support the hypothesis by Jian-xin et al. (2013) which emphasize that environmental awareness among consumers do motivate them in purchasing green products. Consumers with good environmental awareness would only buy green products in spite of their high prices.

## LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Like any other research, this study also has some limitation and direction for future scope. First, the variables used in this study may have different effect on respondents from different social and cultural background. Second, this study has been conducted on limited variables but in future it can be done on different variables such as environmental concern, sustainability, green marketing and many others. Third, one of

the important limitations was sample size of the current study. Size of sample for this study was less and collection of data and information has been done through snowball sampling technique which is a non-probability technique, limiting the generalization of findings. To overcome this, future research should use relevant sample size and probability sampling technique that use to cover wide range of population and that does not limit the generalisation of findings.

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