

**A STUDY THE REASONS FOR PURCHASING BEHAVIOR OF
ENVIRONMENTALLY HARMFUL PRODUCTS AMONG THE
CONSUMERS
(SPECIAL REFERENCE IN BATTICALOA DISTRICT)**

Thineskumar K
Department of Management
Faculty of Commerce & Management, Eastern University
Sri Lanka.

ABSTRACT

It is very important to protect our environment while satisfying the needs of consumers with an ever-increasing variety of products and services. In order to guarantee a sustainable economic growth and protect the environment, many consumers and producers realized the importance of environmentally sensitive efforts. Today, rapid development of technology has caused both positive or negative effects and changes in environment. Therefore, our current environmental situation requires serious attention. Currently we can see the problems that our environment is facing everywhere which includes land & air pollution, ozone depletion, global warming, hazardous waste disposal and water pollution. Today, consumers are aware that their individual consumption behaviour affects the environment and these consumers are more conscious of seriousness of environmental degradation. But if we can deeply explore, they don't not really behave green manner. Even they continually perceived seriousness of environmental problems and degradation actually they perform anti green consumption which could be affect the environment.

Thus, this research is aiming to identify the actual reasons to buy or use the environmental harmful products among the consumers in Batticaloa District. The study uses a qualitative methodology to investigate the reasons form respondents in order to preferring the environmental harmful materials in their life. 20 working consumers were selected as the sample for this study in Batticaloa District. Qualitative content analysis was used to finding the result of this study. According to this study it found the majority of consumers are using environmentally challenged materials as polythene bags and plastics bottles during their casual routines due to the following important reasons, such as environmental harmful materials (Polythene and plastics) are easily to use and more available in market, its price has less, lack of substitutes of green products, consumer's work load and their family burden, producers' packaging, and some compulsive circumstances. Therefore, they compel to use those harmful materials without think of its affects to the community. Consequently, these research findings have provided some insight and feedback to businesses who basically facing a lot of challenges in convincing consumers to purchase green products.

Keywords: *Green products, Environmental harmful products, Green purchasing behaviour*

1. INTRODUCTION

Environmental degradation and sustainability are considered to be among the most serious issues we face in today's world, and there is a growing consciousness regarding all matters related to the environment. Concern about environmental degradation is on the rise in just about every corner of the world. The rapid economic growth in the past years have witnessed increasing consumers' consumption worldwide causing environmental deterioration through over-consumption and utilization of environmental harmful products (Chen and Chai, 2010).

It is anticipated that if the current trend of globalization and irresponsible consumption pattern continues, the environmental degradation would worsen. The consequences of environmental degradation are global warming, depletion of stratospheric ozone layer, pollution of sea and rivers, noise and light pollution, acid rain and desertification (Ramlogan, 1997). A recent study reveals that individuals rank environmental problems as today's top challenge, followed by the economy, healthcare, unemployment and crime (Paetz et al., 2012). In the modern era, green marketing is connected to sustainability and biodiversity. A sharp rise in environmental awareness has been felt in all industrialized countries (Bansal, 2003).

Today, consumers are aware that their individual consumption behaviour affects the environment (Abdul Wahid et al., 2011) and of the seriousness of environmental problems; thus, people are becoming more environmentally conscious (Han et al., 2009). Consumers are more aware of the severity of environmental problems, which has led to an increase in their desire to buy environmentally friendly services and products from businesses that engage in environmentally friendly practices (Roberts, 1996; Kalafatis et al., 1999; Laroche et al., 2001). Paetz et al. (2012) have suggested that there is little doubt that it is possible to change some of the consumption activities of consumers, as long as such a shift is convenient. As a result, the need for and value of green or environmental marketing has been recognized by marketers and scholars (Yam-Tang and Chan, 1997). But even the consumers have become more aware of the impact of their habits on the environment, actually they do not implement their personal life due to some unavoidable reasons (Vishnu Nath et al., 2012). The use of environmental harmful products (polythene bags, plastic goods etc.) much more visible among the consumers in world wide. In the current world, around one trillion polythene bags are consumed every year, equating to 2 million per minute. Different countries have different usage levels, but the entire world has now realized the menace and begun to reduce this usage. In Sri Lanka, it is estimated that 15 kilos of polythene are discarded by each person per month and over five hundred thousand tons of polythene products are imported to Sri Lanka annually to meet this demand (Daily News).

There is a lack of studies were conducted in qualitative methodology related to green purchasing behaviour and green issues. Therefore, I used this research gap and conducted this study. This research is exploring the reasons from respondents to use the environmental harmful products in their life.

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The environmental issues are increasingly influencing every aspect of life of people in Sri Lanka. But, still there are few studies that discussed green products and green issues in the Sri Lankan market context. One survey method-based study undertaken by Wanninayake and Randiwela (2008) investigated the consumer attitudes and perception

towards eco-friendly products in FMCC sector and their willingness to pay for green products. The study showed that the Sri Lankan consumers have a considerable awareness of green products and they are willing to pay more for green products.

The study conducted by Nik Abdul Rashid (2009) shows that consumers may not necessarily would purchase green products or services although they have plenty knowledge on green products and eco-labels. Moreover, a research found that although consumers are care for their environmental, but they still did not buy the green products or services. This means that they do not perform in green manner although they realized on the environmental degrading. In currently, Sri Lankan people also currently use harmful products for the environment (plastic, polyethene etc.) in their daily life and business purpose due to some different reasons. Its mean they do not really perform the green environmental manner even though they have more aware regarding the environmental issues. However, there is lack of studies have been conducted on Sri Lankan consumers regarding the reasons to use environmental harmful products in their daily life.

So, the present study tries to bridge this gap, by interviewing consumers to know about the reasons to use Environmental harmful products in their life.

It mainly focuses on achieving the following objectives in order to address the research problem:

1. To identify what the are the environmental harmful products consumers currently use?
2. To explore reasons why the working consumers do use environmental harmful products (Plastic goods, Polythene, and Energy bulbs etc.) in their life.
3. To identify the ways to improve green consumerism in our society.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Green Products and Harmful Products

Many researchers have defined green products in various definitions. Shabani et al. (2013) stated, green or eco-friendly products are products that can be recycled, do not contaminate the environment and do not squander resources. Green products conserve energy or resources and diminish or eliminate the utilization of noxious contents, pollution and refuse, thus helping to preserve and better the natural environment. According to Kataria et al. (2013) a green product can be defined as a product that meets customers' requirements, is socially acceptable, is manufactured in a sustainable way and has a minimal impact on the environment. Most companies usually realign existing products without altering product structure or refine existing products to diminish its environmentally detrimental effects or reshape corporate culture to ensure environmental issues are consolidated into operational facets or, alternatively, create new businesses that focus solely on the production of green products and green consumers (Kataria et al., 2013).

The products that are actually harming the environment can be called as Environmental harmful products (Chan, 2008). Plastic bottles, polythene bags, energy blubs etc. are the best examples for the environmental harmful products in the real world.

2.2 Green Consumers

A green consumer can be described as a consumer who is particularly concerned with the environment in their purchasing behaviour, marketplace related activities, consumption practices and contemplate the consequences of their conduct on the natural environment around them (McDonald et al., 2006). Green consumers are distinguished as purchasing green products when the opportunity presents itself. They avoid harmful products that may be detrimental to any living entity, which during manufacturing or usage has an environmentally deleterious outcome, which uses substantial amounts of nonrenewable energy or encompasses unscrupulous testing on animal or human subjects.

Generally, every consumer who demonstrates environmentally friendly behaviour is hailed a green consumer (Shabani et al., 2013). It has been demonstrated that green consumers are inclined to pay more for environmentally friendly products. This is advantageous to businesses and governments considering making eco-friendly policy changes (Agyeman et al., 2014).

2.3 Green Consumer Behaviour (GCB)

Consumer behaviour examines how individuals and companies determine how to spend their available resources (time, money and effort) on purchaser associated products. Purchases are affected by consumer behaviour to a large degree by being the predominant triggers in consumers' buying approach. Consumers utilize a decision-making approach when purchasing products or services in order to satisfying needs. A consumer's perception of a product is also impacted by behaviour (Agyeman, 2014 and Smith, 2013).

Kataria et al., 2013 states that, if individuals usually follow a purchasing pattern, they ought to raise particular queries during each of the various stages – identification of need, seek alternate options, explore available options, purchase selection and post-purchase appraisal, in order to transform their perceptions towards pro-environmental marketing into action.

2.4 Barriers to Adoption of Green Products

There are some barriers to consume those green products in our regular life. Due to those reasons the consumers adopt to use environmental harmful products such as polyethene shopping bags, plastics bottles etc. instead of green products. Some researches explained the major barriers to use green products and reasons for consuming the environmental harmful products. The study conducted by Nair et al. (2015) indicates inhabiting green consumption arises because of green products are not easily available, difficulty associated in identifying and locating good authentic green

products, higher price of green products in comparison to the conventional products and consumers have doubts on the quality of green products. Byrne et al. (2001) found the major barrier to use green products is it's have low function performance.

Thus, consumers adopt to non-green products in their life. Bhate et al. (1997) found when explored the markets green products have limited its mean lack of availability in Market places. Thus, consumers switch to non-green product for their different purposes. The study conducted by, Drozdenko et al. (2011) explained the reason consumers adopt to non- green products instead of green products is green products have high prices as compared to conventional non-green products. Salmela et al. (2006) found when comparing with non-green products green products have difficulty of integration in consumers' normal routine. Young et al. (2010) and Tsakiridou et al. (2008) recognized price and lack of availability are the major barriers towards consumer green purchasing behaviour. Further the study conducted by Vishnu Nath et al. (2012) explained low functional performance, lack of availability, lack of support service, difficulty of integration in normal routine and higher prices are the major five barriers to adoption of green products in India.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sample and Data

The scope of this study includes working consumers in Batticaloa district. As the working consumers, the study has selected 20 professionals who are working government and private sector organization in Batticaloa district based on the conveniences sampling method. Business men, School teachers, Doctors, Principle, Bank staff, Lecturers, Fisherman, Manager, Directors and other Government staff are included in research samples. Twenty semi -structured interviews are also conducted on those people to collect the data. Interview was conducted based on interview guide prepared by researcher. These interviews focused to explore their own green consumption behaviour and identify the reasons to use the environmental harmful products in their life and their suggestions to improve the green consumerism in future. All interviews have been conducted in English and their voice has been recorded.

3.2 Interview Process

Before conducting the interviews, existing literature was studied intensively. The gained insights are used as an inspiration for open questions in order to understand their anti-green behaviour. Relevant theories or related themes are collected and to each of them several questions are developed. Based on these questions, an interview guide is developed. In order to prepare fluent interviews, the questions are distributed into different categories. However, during the interviews, the order of questions in the interview guide is not strictly followed. The interview guide was, thus, much more used as a tool to support orientation during the interview and to make sure that all areas of the research are covered (Patton et al., 2002). This interview guide has contented six sub sections.

In the section 01 and 02 briefly discussed about the purpose of study and interviewees' basic demographic information and the interview process. In the section 03 the researcher briefly discussed some important topic with interviewees as Green products, Green environment, and their Green purchase behaviour. In the section 04, this is an important part of the interview. During this section the researcher ask some important question to interviewees regarding their own green consumption behaviour. Furthermore, to identify the reasons to use environmental harmful products in the environment in their daily life. During this section following interview question will ask to interviewees and their comments will be noted.

- Have you heard about the green products and their effects on environment?
- What green activities are you involved in?
- Do you buy green products? For what reasons do you buy them?
If the participant doesn't buy the green products,
- Which are the harmful products do you buy in your life?
(energy lights, plastics goods, polyethene bags, etc.)
- Why do you prefer to use that products?
- In which ways do you dispose (get rid of) those products after your consumption?
- Why don't you consider buying the green products in the future?

In the next section the interviewees ask to tell their own suggestions and comments in order to improve green consumption behaviour in future. Qualitative content analysis is used to analysis the data then the finding are discussed and conclusion and recommendation are drawn.

4. FINDING

4.1 The Demographic characteristics of sample

For the purpose of this study all types of professionals have been selected. Such as school teachers, principle, doctor, staff assistants, managers, lecturers, development officers, computer instructor, lawyer, retired officer and business man. Among these 20 interviewees, 11 responders are male, and 09 respondents are female. Further, my analysis recognized the interviewees as above 30 years old with a majority of 85% in target group. As of the consideration of several aspects of my target group I had found, 04 consumers have GCE A/L qualification, 11 respondents have completed Bachelor's degree, 03 respondents have completed Master degree and 01 respondent has completed Doctorate degree.

Moreover, of the recognition of my research produced as 17 respondents works government and private organization in Batticaloa, 02 respondents are existing business and a respondent do finishing as a job. While we ae on the investigation of their monthly income it shows, 14 respondents earn more than 50,000 rupees as their monthly income. Other 06 respondents earn less than 50,000 rupees as their monthly income.

4.2 Respondents' Green Consumption Behaviour

This section presents and analyses via an interview with 20 working consumers who have qualities of "Green Purchasing Behavior" and existing utilization of environmentally hazardous products simultaneously considers the reasons from the consumers to use those environmental harmful materials in their daily life. This comprises three divisions such as,

- Section (Coding) 01: Information regarding the consumers' green utilization and their green behaviour.
- Section (Coding) 02: Information on ample consumption of environmental harmful products.
- Section (Coding) 03: Analysis the reasons from consumers on why they are still utilizing these articles or products which are challenging to our environment.

4.2.1 Section 01: Information regarding the consumers' green utilization and their green behaviour

Consumers' Green Utilization:

According to the data referring to the interviewed 20 numbers of individual consumers, 20 out of 20 of consumers are using environment friendly material as Silver container for their daily usage of consumption in life. As well as there are 03 consumers are using clay pots for their cooking purpose in their homes. Further, there are 06 number of consumers who had already stopped usage of Energy bulbs and now utilizing completely LED bulbs in their home. There are two consumers using reusable fabric bags for their routine. And also, there are five consumers obviously collect drinking water in glass bottles at their homes. Besides, a respondent uses green energy product as the solar energy in his home.

Consumers' Activities in relation to Green Behaviour:

While investigate the green behaviour of the whole team of 20 consumers which I had interviewed, all of they divide their home waste in accordance with quality assurance via proper mechanism as well as handing over the above waste to Municipal council.

There are 09 consumers have promoted the usage LED bulbs in their homes simultaneously at working station too. There are 04 out of 20 consumers are moving to bio gradable bags from polythene shopping bags for their different purpose in their life. Finally, there are the five consumers are carrying their meals in silver mental boxes to their works. When investigates those consumers' green behaviour can be derived that usage of reusable /bio-gradable bags and silver water bottles are very less among interviewed 20 numbers of target group.

4.2.2 Section 02: Information on ample consumption of environmental harmful products (Environmental harmful products)

Based on the data collected from the respondents which I had interviewed, are using environmentally challenged materials as tissue bags during their casual routines. In due of the easiest access of polyethylene - consumers focus on using environmentally challenged materials. As well as, there are 13 consumers are using polythene lunch tissue for their meal carrying purpose. Further, there are 10 out of 20 consumers are using plastic bottles for carrying the water to their work places and daily usage too.

Among those twenty consumers there are 05 consumers using environmental harmful energy bulbs in their homes. Especially I had collected the opinions of two consumers on usage of polythene bags, first is a consumer is a vendor who owned a shop, he mentioned that he always using polythene to distribute materials for his customers because of his easiness and fast in action. As well as a fish vendor too mentioned that he too mostly uses polythene bags to sell fishes because of his easiness and no any other substitutes.

Hence, we analyses the above common statements; it's obvious to predict that people of Batticaloa District are aware well on the usage of degradable bags but in common they are still using environmentally harmful polythene bags and plastics things for unavoidable cases.

4.2.3 Section 03: Analysis the reasons from consumers on why they are still utilizing these articles or products which are challenging to our environment

The section investigates the main ideology of second research questions which means it explores that why consumers are using environmental harmful products (hazardable polythene bags, plastic goods) while they have obvious awareness /imagery on danger of polythene usage.

We can investigate the consumers' reasons of using environmentally challenged products by considering and consolidate the data which have gotten from the selected respondents. As per the result of interview with 20 number of persons/officials/vendors /doctors, administrators etc., especially native of Batticaloa; we had analyzed and concluded the following reasons by specially consider the usage environmentally challenged /harmful materials.

20 out of 20 consumers are utilizing polythene bags because they found it's easy to use as well as easy to carry the materials from one place to another place. And another reason they said those are quickly available from any market at time. These are first main reasons to use polythene materials in their life. All the consumers which I had interviewed said that another reason to use those harmful materials is a smaller number of alternatives instead of polythene in Sri Lanka. As well as the prices of bio gradable goods are too expensive.

18 out of 20 consumers are using those harmful materials by consider their work load or work pressure and their family situations. There are 16 number of the consumers says that they are able to use these polythene and plastic because of the promotion from vendors and shop owners. In this time cannot to be avoided to take those materials. Further of the view from 15 consumers that they are forced use polythene. Because some producers pack their products in polythene such as sugar and rice are packing in polythene bags. When want to consume those necessary good can not to be avoided to those packing materials. Thus, the polythene usage must force to them.

Another set of consumers suggested due to busy and fast life, they haven't any time to realize the environmental issues and cannot to carry bio gradable bags always with them. The suggestion from the 04 consumers that they use harmful energy blubs instead of LED blubs because they have lack of knowledge and not enough awareness regarding green products. Three consumers said to use those harmful polythene materials due to some compulsive circumstances. Such as bring the fish, carrying the curries for long journey etc. Finally, a respondent suggests the reason to use those

materials is the conflict between explicit and implicit attitudes among the people. And another respondent said youngest felt odd to carry the things on fabric bags in market.

Review of a conversation with two merchant shop owners we understood they are using polythene continually because they predict that always consumers visit their shops without any degradable bags so its compulsory to provide a container to sell our stuff, means we should use a cheap mode of access to pack sold articles. Finally, we moved to use polythene because of its easiest access and availability in market always. Conclusion from a fisherman on polythene usage, he said that he was compelled to use polythene because he moves from places to places to sell his fishes, so polythene is found to be as a stuff made his intention success. It's cheap and available everywhere in light weight especially easy to use at any time because water cannot penetrate outside so fishes will be fresh in condition for certain hours.

4.3 The Ways to improve Green Consumption in Future

The section investigates the main ideology of third research questions which means it explores the ways to improve green consumerism in our society from the selected respondents.

Based on that analysis, all interviewed consumers suggested that the government of Sri Lanka should implement strict laws and grants to introduce degradable bags to avoid the harmful effects of polythene. Furthermore, the above all consumers suggested that government must introduce ample number of alternatives with choices of degradable bags to public, but prices of bags should be as normal to all types of consumers. 15 number of consumers told its compulsory to conduct awareness programs or seminars to the society on emphasizing the harmful effects of polythene/plastics to human as well. And a respondent suggest should be establish green consumer societies and the green association in district wise or national wise, as well as to initiate target activities regarding to reduce polyethene usages or saving energies in working organization and it should establish regional and national wise.

All interviewed consumers requested that government must permanently stop polythene bags usage in Sri Lanka, as well as make penalties should be given against polyethene victims. And they requested that government of Sri Lanka must introduce proper mechanisms to garbage disposal, it helps to avoid the accumulation of polythene on roads. Some have suggested that environmentally friendly products should be attractive to buy therefore it encourage younger generation, so they will get enchanted and promote "Green Purchasing Behavior".

Over all stamen from all types of vendors is that they welcome positive alternatives from state of Sri Lanka on easy usage of Green products and their prices must be normal for all types of consumers. In a nutshell the whole team of consumers humbly requested that producers must use degradable articles/bags to pack their products to avoid polythene in any circumstances in market.

5. DISCUSSION

The study conducted by Ricky Chan et al. (1998) found the use of paper, silver, and glass materials were not considered to be very harmful to the environment probably because of the indirect effects involved and it will not lead to air pollution or noise pollution in the surrounding environment.

Among the 20 individual consumers, all of consumers (100%) are using environment friendly materials as the Silver containers for their daily usage of consumption in life. And 15% of consumers use clay pots for their cooking purpose. Further 30% of consumers who had already stopped usage of Energy lamps and now utilizing completely LED bulbs in their living place. Over 20% of consumers using reusable fabric bags for their routine. Also, same percentage of consumers obviously collect drinking water in glass bottles. While investigate green behavior of the whole team of 20 consumers which I had interviewed, all of they divide their waste in accordance with quality assurance via proper mechanism as well as handing over the above waste to Municipal council. Over 25% of respondents carrying their meals in silver boxes. Finally, 45% of consumers have promoted the usage LED bulbs in their homes simultaneously at working station too.

While investigate their green behaviour the majority 99.9% of consumers are using environmentally challenged materials as polythene shopping bags and lunch tissues during their casual routines. And over 70% of consumers use harmful polythene lunch tissue for their parceling purpose. In additionally 50% of consumers using plastic bottles and containers for their daily usage too. Furthermore, of investigation of whole respondents it's understood 25% of consumers use harmful energy blubs in their home purpose. But the consumption of LED bulbs instead of energy line bulbs are gradually increasing nowadays. Especially I had collected the opinions of two respondents on usage of polythene bags, first is a vendor who owned a shop mentioned that he always using polythene bags to distribute materials for his customers because of his easiness & fast in action. Another person is a fisherman. He also mentioned that mostly uses polythene bags to sell fishes because of his easiness and no any other substitutes. Hence, we discussion the above common statements; it's obvious to predict that people of Batticaloa are aware well on the usage of degradable bangs but in common they are still using environmentally harmful polythene bags by considering their easy access & cheap in price of polythene.

As per the result of analysis, with 20 number of persons/officials/vendors /doctors, administrators etc., especially native of Batticaloa. I developed the followings themes that are the main reasons by specially consider the usage of environmentally challenged /harmful material by them through the contend theme analysis.

Theme 01 - Ease of use and easy to be carrying the goods

The whole consumers are utilizing polythene bags and plastic bottles because they found it's easy to use, easy to carry the things from one place to other places. As well as those weight less. Due to this reason the usage of environmental harmful materials (polythene and plastic) are more visible among the society.

Theme 02 - Quickly available from any market

All interviewed consumers said that the reasons to use environmental harmful products are more available and quickly can be get than green products form any market. Therefore, their work to be easier and more comfortable.

Theme 03 - Lack of alternatives instead of polythene in Sri Lanka

Most consumers can not to be avoided to use those harmful products due to lack of proper alternative instead of polythene bags in Sri Lanka.

Theme 04 - Green products are more expensive

From the analysis can be identified the green products are more expensive than environmental harmful product in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the people specially the shop vendors consider their income and profit and to be used environmental harmful products instead of green products in their different purpose.

Theme 05 - Work Load and work pressures

90% of the consumers are using polythene by consider their work load. Because working consumers work different places. Therefore, their works should be different from each other. For instance, the works for the bank staffs are totally different from school teachers and other professionals. And they have more pressure and stress. Under this situation they really don't have any time to realize regarding the environmental issues because of too much of works loads in their work places. In this time, they should prefer environmental harmful materials (polythene bags and plastic water bottles) for their easiness and comfortable.

Theme 06 - Promotion from vendors and shop owners

80% of the consumers said that they are able to use these polythene and plastic because of the promotion from vendors and shop owners. Because when purchasing any goods such as vegetables, fruits, even bread also from any super markets the vender or shop owner give those goods in polythene bags. In this situation can not to be avoided those bags. This scenario lead to increase the usage of polythene bags among the people.

Theme 07 - Busy and fast life

The view from the 20% of consumers, due to their busy and fast life culture they have no any time to realize the environmental issues and protect their environment. As well as it is difficult to carry bio gradable bags always with them. In this situation they use polythene bags when suddenly purchasing their necessary goods in anywhere.

Theme 08 - Producers packs their goods in polythene

Further of the view from 20% of consumers that they are forced use polythene because some producers pack their products in polythene. In Sri Lanka, necessary foods items such as rice, sugar etc. packing in non-bio gradable bags. As well as beverage also stuffed in plastic bottles. In these situations, cannot omit those materials in our life. Therefore, it should be lead the usage of non-bio gradable (polyethene and plastic) materials among the whole people as well in our environment.

Theme 09 - Lack of knowledge and awareness regarding their environment

Form the analysis can be identified, around 15% of consumers suggested that they have lack of knowledge on effects of polythene and plastics as well as utilization of green products too. And they really do not have any knowledge regarding the LED blubs. Therefore, this also influence to use environmental harmful materials among the people.

Theme 10 - Some compulsive circumstances

Review from the 15% of consumers that they suggest the reason to use harmful product is some compulsive circumstances. It means due to some compulsive circumstances can to be avoided to use or consume polythene bags in our life. For instance, polythene bags are only suitable for carrying fishes, don't have any other option in our places. As well as when travelling long journey lunch tissue are more suitable to parcel the meals because easily handle and throw out.

Previous studies also found the reasons for consumers non-green purchasing behaviour which is support to this study Nair et al. (2015) indicates inhabiting green consumption arises because of green products are not easily available, difficulty associated in identifying and locating good authentic green products, higher price of green products in comparison to the conventional products and consumers have doubts on the quality of green products.

The study was conducted by Byrne et al., 2001 explained, due to low functional performance of green products the consumers adopt to harmful products instead of green products in their life. And another study conducted by Salmela et al., 2006 explained green products are difficulty of integration in normal routine for every person. The same result can be identified from the study was conducted by Bhate et al. (1997), It found lack of availability of green product is major barrier use of green products. Vishnu Nath et al. (2012) that concluded the low functional performance, lack of availability, lack of support service, difficulty of integration in normal routine and higher prices are the major five barriers to adoption of green products. Further, our results are consistent with those of Young et al. (2010) and Tsakiridou et al. (2008) recognized price and lack of availability as major barriers towards consumer green purchase behaviour. These finding were similar to research results of consumers to use environmental harmful products instead of green products in their life.

Finally, this study discussed regarding the ways how to improve the green consumption in our society from the consumers' different perspectives. Moreover, referring negotiations with interviewees as well as the review of research can be understood the followings are the common way to improve the green consumption among the consumers in our society:

- Government of Sri Lanka must implement strict laws against the polythene goods and make penalties should be given against polyethene victim.
- Introduce ample number of alternatives against the environment harmful products, and their prices should be normal to all types of consumers.
- Compulsory to conduct awareness programs or seminars to the society on emphasizing the harmful effects of polythene/plastics to human as well.
- Should be establish green consumer societies and the green association in district wise or national wises.
- Initiate target activities regarding to reduce polyethene usages or saving energies in working organization and it should established regional and national wises.
- Environmentally friendly products (degradable bags) should be attractive towards younger generation.
- Producers must use degradable articles/bags to pack their products to avoid polythene in any circumstances in market.

- Government of Sri Lanka must introduce proper mechanisms to garbage disposal, it helps to avoid the accumulation of polythene on roads.

If the government or the organization implement the above suggestion properly with the regular observations; could be completely prohibited the usage of environmental harmful materials among the people and enhanced green consumption in our society.

The study shows those are the major suggestions to improve green consumerism in our society in future from consumers. This finding similar with Vishnu Nath et al. (2012) which found to make consumer aware about the environmental issues, creative advertisement campaigns should be developed to spread the message of environmental sustainability, government and other industries try to spread awareness about the environmental issues through promotion techniques, and government start labels to provide environmental certification to other classes of products are the common ways to implement the green consumerism in Society.

6. CONCLUSION

The main aim of the study is to explore the reasons from consumers to use the environmental harmful products in their life. From the analysis and discussion, the study can be contributed to identify the main reasons to use environmental harmful products from different consumers such as environmental harmful materials (Polythene and plastics) are easily and more available in market, easy to use and handle, when compare with green product its price has less, lack of substitutes, consumer's work load and their family burden, producers' packaging, lack of awareness are the main common reasons to prefer those harmful products instead of green products in their life.

So, through these findings of this research the empirical gap has been closed. This study has useful managerial implication. It tells about the main factors of green purchasing which can be helpful for marketers in creating appropriate making strategies for promoting green purchasing behaviour among the consumers in Sri Lanka. The research findings have provided some insight and feedback to marketers who basically facing a lot of challenges in encouraging consumers to buy environmentally friendly products. To successfully enhance and redefine this new target market, they need to understand the path that move the environmental factors to green purchase behavior. By gathering this information, marketers would be able to articulate their strategies to more effectively attract consumers to buy green products.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study is to explore the reasons from them to use environmental harmful material in their life. Based on those surveys and the prior researches, the consumers are willing to buy the bio gradable products for their purpose but due to the inevitable reasons and unexpected situation they cannot be avoided to use environmental harmful things in their life. Therefore, this section provides recommendations to improve green consumerism among the whole people in our society.

- Primary education can also play a major part in increasing environmental awareness, therefore making students awareness about the environment from an early age.
- Sri Lankan government must implement strict laws against the polythene goods and make penalties should be given against polythene victim.

- Introduce ample number of alternatives against the environment harmful products such as fabric or bio gradable bags, banana leaves in the markets and their prices should be normal to all types of consumers.
- Compulsory to conduct awareness programs or seminars to the society on emphasizing the harmful effects of polythene/plastics to human as well.
- The Government and industry must try to spread awareness about environmental issues through promotion techniques like TV, radio advertisements.
- Should be establish green consumer societies and the green association in district or national wises.
- Initiate target activities regarding to reduce polyethene usages or saving energies in working organization and it should establish regional and national wises.
- Environmentally friendly products (degradable bags) should be attractive towards younger generation.
- Producers must use degradable articles/bags to pack their products to avoid polythene in any circumstances in market.
- Government of Sri Lanka must introduce proper mechanisms to garbage disposal, it helps to avoid the accumulation of polythene on roads.

From the past survey data and previous studies denoted the millions of polythene materials and harmful goods are directly coming from supermarket to consumers. Therefore, these are the special recommendation to reduce polythene usage at super market level:

- Educate customers on recycling and reusing by Expertise at the outlet itself (like they promote goods).
- Make a discipline ‘Carrying Your Own Bag’.
- Discounting (as a percentage of final bill value) on bills when customers use their own Non-Polythene (cloth) bags.
- Encourage customers to use re-usable cloth grocery bags and decline plastic bags.
- Encourage to buying in bulk.
- Encourage customers to buy reusable, rechargeable items.
- Reduce issuing no. of polythene bags for item separation.
- Reduce polythene/plastic food packaging.
- Increase beverages bottles in glass so can be reused.
- Educate and encourage people to reduce eating processed foods (good for health as well as the environment since packaging comes only polythene).

Based on this research finding can be identified the usage of harmful polythene bags are more visible among the people in Sri Lanka. Therefore, as Sri Lankan citizens, we must commend the government for bringing policies to curb excessive usage of polythene bags. The directives have not yet banned the polythene bags but directed retailers to use biodegradable bags.

Researcher wishes to suggest that the government declare everyday “No polythene bag policy” nationwide which makes it compulsory for consumers to buy a biodegradable bag when making purchases. But if a consumer insists on a polythene bag, a government levy should be charged, as some of the countries are presently doing. The

government can allow the public to buy plastic bags including the levy but must set a timeframe to discontinue this practice. The government also should work closely with all stakeholders on environmental protection educational programs, emphasizing on anti-litter campaigns while encouraging consumers to opt for re-usable bags. On the other hand, we as responsible citizens, must discharge our individual roles and responsibilities by embracing environmentally friendly practices in our daily lives. If we change our present attitudes, we will be able to witness tangible results. Protecting the environment is not solely the responsibility of the government and positive results can never be achieved if we do not work collaboratively.

8. LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

There are several limitations related to this study have been identified by researcher. Firstly, the main limitation in this study is geographical bias. The population of study is Batticaloa District. Therefore, it is suggested to conduct a survey including other Districts in Sri Lanka. And those results could be compared with one district with another. Further, the sample size of the study was limited to 20 working consumes. Therefore, focusing on a large sample from all over the Batticaloa District.

Secondly, this study is cross-sectional study which is data only collected at one point of time. Consumers' purchasing behaviour will constantly change from time to time due to many changeable influences. Therefore, the result of this finding is inappropriate to explain and reflect the pattern of consumers' purchase behaviour. In other word, this research only able to describe the pattern of consumers' purchase behaviour at one point of time.

Finally, the study was considered only the working consumers rather than whole consumes. Thus, it may not be appropriate to generalize the results. Therefore, future study is needed to test the proposed factors of whole working and non-working consumers.

REFERENCES

- Agyeman, C.M. (2014). Consumers' buying behavior towards green products: An exploratory study. *International journal of management research and business strategy*, 3(1), 188-197.
- Ajzen, I., & Driver, B. L. (1992). Application of the theory of planned behavior to leisure choice: *Journal of Leisure Research*, 24(3), 207-224.
- Bansal, P. (2003). From issues to actions: The importance of individual concerns and organizational values in responding to natural environmental issues. *Organization Science*, 14(5), 510-527.
- Bhate, S., & Lawler, K. (1997). Environmentally friendly products: factors that influence their adoption. *Technovation*, 17(8), 457-465.
- Byrne, B. M. (2001). Structural equation modeling with AMOS, EQS, and LISREL: Comparative approaches to testing for the factorial validity of a measuring instrument. *International journal of testing*, 1(1), 55-86.

- Chan, R. Y. K. & Lau, L. B. Y. (2008) Antecedents of green purchases: A survey in China. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 17(4), 338 – 357.
- Chen, Y. S. (2010). The drivers of green brand equity: green brand image, green satisfaction, and green trust. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 93(2), 307-319.
- Drozdenko, R., Jensen, M., & Coelho, D. (2011). Pricing of green products: Premiums paid, consumer characteristics and incentives. *International Journal of Business, Marketing, and Decision Sciences*, 4(1), 106-116.
- Han H, Hsu L, Lee J. 2009. Empirical investigation of the roles of attitudes toward green behaviours, overall image, gender, and age in hotel customers' eco-friendly decision-making process. *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 28(4): 519–528.
- Kalafatis S, Pollard M, East R, Tsogas M. 1999. Green marketing and Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour: a cross-market examination. *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 16(5): 441–460.
- Kataria, A. & Garg, R. (2013). Factors affecting green purchase behavior: An in-depth study of Indian consumers. *Journal of management research – SCMS Noida*, 1(2), 3-17.
- Kataria, A., Kataria, A. & Garg, R. (2013). Factors affecting green purchase behavior: An in-depth study of Indian consumers. *Journal of management research – SCMS Noida*, 1(2), 3-17.
- Laroche M, Begeron J, Barbaro-Forleo G. 2001. Targeting consumers who are willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products. *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 18(6): 503–520.
- McDonald, S., Oates, C., Alevizou, P., Young, W., & Hwang, K. (2006). Communication strategies for sustainable technologies: Identifying patterns of behaviour: University of Cardiff.
- Nair, S. R., & Maram, H. K. (2015). Towards Sustainable Consumption: Analyzing Green Consumer Behaviour, 01-13.
- Nath, V., Kumar, R., Agrawal, R., Gautam, A., & Sharma, V. (2012). Green behaviors of Indian consumers. *International Journal of Research in Management, Economics and Commerce*, 2(11), 488-498.
- Nik Abdul Rashid. N. R. (2009). Awareness of Eco-label in Malaysia's Green Marketing Initiative. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(8), 132-141.
- Paetz A, Dutschke E, Fichtner W. 2012. Smart homes as a means to sustainable energy consumption: a study of consumer perceptions. *Journal of Consumer Policy* 35(1): 23–41.

- Paetz, A. G., Dütschke, E., & Fichtner, W. (2012). Smart homes as a means to sustainable energy consumption: A study of consumer perceptions. *Journal of consumer policy*, 35(1), 23-41.
- Rahbar, E., & Abdul Wahid, N. (2011). Investigation of green marketing tools' effect on consumers' purchase behavior. *Business strategy series*, 12(2), 73-83.
- Ramlogan, R. (1997). Environment and human health: A threat to all. *Environmental Management and Health*, 8(2), 51-66.
- Roberts J. 1996. Green consumers in the 1990s: profile and implications for advertising. *Journal of Business Research* 36(3):217–231.
- Shabani, N., Ashoori, M., Taghinejad, M., Beyrami, H. & Fekri, M.N. (2013). The study of green consumers' characteristics and available green sectors in the market. *International research Journal of applied and basic science*, 4(7), 1880-1883.
- Tsakiridou, E., Boutsouki, C., Zotos, Y., & Mattas, K. (2008). Attitudes and behaviour towards organic products: an exploratory study. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 36(2), 158-175.
- Wanninayake, W. M. C. B., & Randiwela, P. (2008, June). Consumer attractiveness towards green products of FMCG sector: an empirical study. In Proceedings of the Oxford Business and Economics Conference.
- Yam-Tang E, Chan R. 1997. Purchasing behaviours and perception of environmentally harmful products. *Marketing Intelligence and Planning* 16(6): 356–362.
- Young, W., Hwang, K., McDonald, S., & Oates, C. J. (2010). Sustainable consumption: green consumer behaviour when purchasing products. *Sustainable development*, 18(1), 20-31.