

SEGMENTING GENERATION Y CONSUMERS BASED ON GREEN PURCHASE INTENTION

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ABSTRACT

Purpose- This paper aims to discover Generation Y consumer segments with different green purchase intentions that are determined by environmental knowledge, environmental concern, environmental attitude and price sensitivity.

Methodology- A total of 260 Generation Y consumers were contacted through online questionnaires using convenience sampling. Factor analysis and K-means clustering analysis were applied to investigate the segments.

Findings- Five variables (environmental knowledge, environmental concern, environmental attitude, price sensitivity and green purchase intention) emerged from factor analysis were used for segmenting consumers into three clusters, namely as True Greens, Moderately Greens and Non-Greens. True Greens give high importance to environmental protection and they are willing to pay extra for green products. Moderately Greens are sensitive to environmental issues but their price sensitivity affects their green purchase intention negatively. Non-Greens are insensitive to environmental efforts and they do not care about buying green products.

Conclusion- The results are not only useful for marketers of green products to understand different consumer segments that show significant variations in their green purchase intention, and approach them accordingly but also for academics working on consumer behavior.

Keywords: Cluster analysis, generation Y, green consumers, green marketing, green purchase intention, segmentation.

JEL Codes: M30, M31, M39

1. INTRODUCTION

As environmental damage caused by over consumption of natural resources has driven attention from public, buying green products seemed to be a way of coping with this problem. Green marketing is a process that aims to satisfy consumers' requirements in a sustainable way in order to be beneficial towards society (Chen and Chai, 2010) by producing, pricing and delivering environmentally harmless products (Grant, 2008; Jain and Kaur, 2004; Pride and Ferrell, 2008). While environmentally conscious consumers begin to alter their conventional purchase practices, preferring green products and bearing the cost of relatively high price of these products have become two of the major issues (Newton, Tsarenko, Ferraro and Sands, 2015). This study aims to discover Generation Y consumer segments with different green purchase intentions that are supposed to be driven by environmental knowledge, environmental concern, environmental attitude and price sensitivity. The results of this research will be useful for producers of green products and marketing professionals who can gain a better understanding of consumer segments to have a strategic advantage in marketing practices.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Environmental Knowledge

Environmental knowledge can be described as consumers' general knowledge about environment and ecosystems. According to D'Souza, Taghian and Lamb (2006), environmental knowledge expands in two ways; firstly, consumers have to be tutored to grasp the effect of a product to environment and secondly, consumers have to be sure that the product is gone through an environmental-friendly manufacturing process. So, environmental knowledge can possibly be used to predict consumers' green purchase intention by building positive attitude towards green products.

2.2. Environmental Concern

Kalafatis, Pollard, East and Tsogas (1999) define environmental concern as the consumers realize that the environment is in danger and the natural resources are finite. This concern will lead consumers to be aware of the seriousness of environmental problems and act accordingly. In terms of preventing environmental harm, people may be willing to buy green products and feel themselves to behave

appropriately (Alibeli and Johnson, 2009). Therefore, environmental concern can be a driver of green purchase intention unless there is high sensitivity of price.

2.3. Environmental Attitude

According to Armstrong and Kotler (2009), "attitude is a person's consistently favorable or unfavorable evaluations, feelings, and tendencies towards an object or idea", so it can be applied to environmental context. Balderjahn (1988) and Kotchen & Reiling (2000) found that the people having a positive attitude towards the environment tend to purchase environmental-friendly products. Hughner, McDonagh, Prothero, Shultz and Stanton (2007) who indicated that although consumers had a favorable attitude towards green products reversed this statement; it did not ensure the buying of green products.

2.4. Price Sensitivity

Since green products are priced higher than conventional products due to higher costs borne in the process, consumers can develop various behavior patterns according to their price sensitivity levels. D'Souza et al. (2006) and Aman, Harun and Hussein (2012), asserted that green consumers who perceived price as an insignificant element in their buying decision were eager to pay a relatively high price for green products by feeling themselves determined to bear this cost and act consciously. However, consumers are generally price sensitive as for green products and the price characteristics affect their purchasing decision (Anderson and Hansen, 2004).

2.5. Green Purchase Intention

Rashid (2009) described green purchase intention as the possibility and eagerness of consumers to give priority to green products over traditional products in their purchase decisions. Intention is a significant predictor of individuals' actual behavior in the future. The green purchase intention of consumers is like a representative for their real purchase behavior (Ramayah, Lee and Mohamad, 2010). The purchase intention of the consumer positively affects the probability of a consumer's actual purchase decision to buy green products (Chen, 2013; Han, Hsu and Lee 2009).

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Convenience sampling as a type of non-probability sampling was used for the objectives of this study for the reason that convenience sampling allows researchers to gather basic information rapidly and efficiently (Sekaran, 2000). The sample size of the present study consisted of Generation Y consumers born between 1977 and 1994. An online questionnaire was distributed through e-mail based groups, forums and social media. A total of 260 completed questionnaires were obtained and imported on to SPSS 22 for testing and analysis. The questionnaire consisted of 23 questions in five-point Likert scale from 1 to 5 ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree and 6 demographic questions. Table 1 represents the study variables, item numbers and sources of adapted scales.

Table 1: Scales Used in Research

No	Variable	Number of Items	Reference
1	Environmental Knowledge	6	Mostafa (2007)
2	Environmental Concern	4	Stern and Dietz (1994) ; Singh and Bansal (2012)
3	Environmental Attitude	5	Akbar, Hassan, Khurshid, Niaz and Rizwan (2014)
4	Price Sensitivity	6	Goldsmith (1996)
5	Green Purchase Intention	3	Chen and Chang (2012)

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Factor Analysis

The results of factor analysis reveal that the variables shown in Table 2 are adequate for minimum required value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (0.6) and value of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (sig. at 0.005) (Kaiser, 1970). For that matter, the sample size is widely accepted and there are enough correlations among variables.

Table 2: Results of Factor Analysis

No	Variable	KMO Value	Bartless's Test of Sphericity, significant
1	Environmental Knowledge	0.768	0.000
2	Environmental Concern	0.730	0.000
3	Environmental Attitude	0.743	0.000
4	Price Sensitivity	0.825	0.000
5	Green Purchase Intention	0.811	0.000

4.2. Reliability Analysis

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), Cronbach's Alpha value; less than 0.60 is poor, between 0.60 and 0.80 is acceptable, and above 0.80 is good for reliability. As seen in Table 5, Chronbach's Alpha values calculated for research variables in Table 5 are above 0.8 and this indicates that the survey instrument is highly reliable to measure five variables.

Table 3: Reliability of Research Variables

No	Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Environmental Knowledge	6	0.886
2	Environmental Concern	4	0.861
3	Environmental Attitude	5	0.803
4	Price Sensitivity	6	0.888
5	Green Purchase Intention	3	0.879

4.3. K-Means Clustering Analysis

K-Means Clustering analysis was applied with three clusters to segment Generation Y consumers according to their green purchase intention. According to the results shown in Table 4, 52 respondents belong to Cluster 1, 96 respondents belong to Cluster 2 and 112 respondents belong to Cluster 3.

Table 4: Descriptive Statics of Clusters

	Frequency	Percentage
1	52	20.0
2	96	37.0
3	112	43.0
Total	260	100.0

Final cluster centers in Table 5 show that respondents belonging to cluster one have relatively lower levels of environmental knowledge, environmental concern, environmental attitude, green purchase intention with higher price sensitivity and they are named as "Non-Greens". Respondents having average levels of these variables are called "Moderately Greens" and participants who have the highest level of variables except for price sensitivity are called "True Greens". This group of people has the lowest price sensitivity when compared to other two clusters.

Table 5: Final Cluster Centers

Final Cluster Centers	Cluster		
	Non-Greens	True Greens	Moderately Greens
1. I know that I buy products and packages that are environmentally safe.	2.93	4.37	3.85
2. I know more about recycling than the average person	2.41	3.95	2.88
3. I know how to select products and packages that reduce the amount of waste ending up in landfills.	2.30	4.28	3.53
4. I understand the environmental phrases and symbols on product package.	2.19	4.32	3.37
5. I am very knowledgeable about environmental issues.	2.35	3.99	2.69
6. I am worried about the worsening of the quality of environment	2.01	3.55	1.81
7. Environment is my major concern	1.96	3.82	2.82
8. I am emotionally involved in environmentally protection issues	1.86	4.45	3.59
9. I often think about how the environmental quality can be	1.80	3.99	2.84

improved

10. Green practice is good.	2.43	4.39	3.09
11. Green practice is useful.	2.81	4.24	2.24
12. Green practice is rewarding.	2.85	3.58	3.40
13. Green practice is sensible.	2.99	3.76	2.83
14. Green practice is responsible.	3.01	3.41	1.95
15. I don't mind paying more to try out a new green product.	1.85	3.98	2.48
16. I don't mind spending a lot of money to buy a new green product.	1.64	3.85	2.14
17. I am less willing to buy a new green product if I think that it will be high in price.	3.78	1.92	3.10
18. I know that a new green product is likely to be more expensive than older ones, but that does not matter to me.	2.09	4.10	3.45
19. A really great new green product is worth paying a lot of money for.	1.95	3.99	2.73
20. In general, the price or cost of buying green products is important to me.	4.12	2.01	3.15
21. I intend to purchase this product because of its environmental concern	2.30	4.33	2.98
22. I expect to purchase this product in the future because of its environmental performance	1.76	4.37	3.70
23. Overall, I am glad to purchase this product because it is environmental friendly.	2.29	4.27	3.82

As shown in Table 6, Non-Greens and True Greens are the most differentiated clusters while True-Greens and Moderately Greens are showed to be the most resembling clusters in this study.

Table 6: Distance between Final Cluster Centers

Distance between Final Cluster Centers			
Cluster	Non-Greens	True Greens	Moderately Greens
Non-Greens		3.339	1.115
True Greens	3.339		0.953
Moderately Greens	1.115	0.953	

According to the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents depicted in Table 7, clusters are profiled as follows:

Cluster named Non-Greens were mostly female, aged between 23-28, single, undergraduate, employed for wages and have a monthly income between 2001-3000 TRY.

Cluster named True Greens were mostly male, aged between 35-40, single, undergraduate, employed for wages and have a monthly income between 2001-3000 TRY.

Cluster named Moderately Greens were mostly female, aged between 29-34, single, undergraduate, employed for wages and have a monthly income between 2001-3000 TRY.

Table 7: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Clusters

		Clusters			
		Non-Greens	True Greens	Moderately Greens	Total
Gender	Female	28 (%54)	38 (%40)	51 (%46)	117 (%45)
	Male	24 (%46)	58 (%60)	61 (%54)	143 (%55)
	Total	52 (%100)	96 (%100)	112 (%100)	260 (%100)
Age	23-28	22 (%42)	17 (%18)	31 (%28)	70 (%27)
	29-34	13 (%25)	31 (%32)	48 (%43)	92 (%35.3)
	35-40	17 (%33)	48 (%50)	33 (%29)	98 (%37.7)
	Total	52 (%100)	96 (%100)	112 (%100)	260 (%100)
Marital Status	Single	38 (%73)	51 (%53)	88 (%79)	177 (%68)
	Married	14 (%27)	45 (%47)	24 (%21)	83 (%32)
	Total	52 (%100)	96 (%100)	112 (%100)	260 (%100)
Education Level	Less than high school graduate	2 (%3)	0 (%0)	1 (%1)	3 (%1.1)
	High school graduate	6 (%12)	3 (%0.3)	3 (%3)	12 (%4.6)
	Undergraduate	24 (%46)	68 (%71)	89 (%79)	181 (%69.6)
	Graduate	16 (%31)	17 (%18)	13 (%12)	46 (%17.7)
	Post-graduate	4 (%8)	8 (%8)	6 (%5)	18 (%7)
	Total	52 (%100)	96 (%100)	112 (%100)	260 (%100)
Employment Status	Employed for wages	14 (%27)	69 (%72)	86 (%77)	169 (%65)
	Self-employed	16 (%31)	5 (%5)	7 (%6)	28 (%10.7)
	Out of work	11 (%21)	7 (%7)	9 (%8)	27 (%10.3)
	Student	11 (%21)	15 (%16)	10 (%9)	36 (%14)
	Total	52 (%100)	96 (%100)	112 (%100)	260 (%100)
Monthly Income	1000 TRY or less	11 (%21)	20 (%21)	21 (%19)	52 (%20)
	1001-2000 TRY	12 (%23)	11 (%11)	17 (%15)	40 (%15.3)
	2001-3000 TRY	13 (%25)	23 (%24)	25 (%22)	61 (%23.5)
	3001-4000 TRY	8 (%15)	21 (%22)	19 (%17)	48 (%18.5)
	4001-5000 TRY	4 (%8)	13 (%13)	20 (%18)	37 (%14.2)
	5001 TRY and above	4 (%8)	8 (%9)	10 (%9)	22 (%8.5)
	Total	52 (%100)	96 (%100)	112 (%100)	260 (%100)

Since all factors have a p value lower than 0.05, it can be said that clusters are separated from each other as far as possible and they are homogenous.

Table 8: Differentiating Power for Each Factor in Cluster Analysis

Factors	F value	Sig
F1. Environmental Knowledge	56.890	0.000
F2. Environmental Concern	65.165	0.000
F3. Environmental Attitude	79.603	0.000
F4. Price Sensitivity	232.101	0.000
F5. Green Purchase Intention	113.580	0.000

To understand whether there is a significant difference among clusters in terms of environmental knowledge, One-Way ANOVA was applied. For environmental knowledge variable, group variances are homogenous ($p > 0.05$) so prerequisite of ANOVA was provided. As a result of the test, it is determined that there is a significant difference among clusters ($F(2)=305.683; P=0.000$).

Table 9: Levene Test for the Relationship between Environmental Knowledge and Clusters

	Levene Statistic	d.f.1	d.f.2	p value
Environmental Knowledge	0.119	2	257	0.783

In order to understand which group caused this difference, Tukey test was used. True Greens have higher levels of environmental knowledge when compared to Non-Greens ($\mu_{\text{true greens}}=4.1598; \mu_{\text{non-greens}}=1.9267$).

Table 10: ANOVA between Environmental Knowledge and Clusters

		N	Means	F value	p value
Environmental Knowledge	Non-Greens	52	1.9267	305.683	0.000
	True Greens	96	4.1598		
	Moderately Greens	112	3.1871		
	Total	260	3.3838		
Tukey Results		Mean Difference	Standard Error	p value	
Non-Greens	True Greens	-2.233*	0.752	0.000	
	Moderately Greens	-1.260*	0.744	0.000	
True Greens	Non-Greens	2.233*	0.752	0.000	
	Moderately Greens	0.972*	0.602	0.000	
Moderately Greens	Non-Greens	1.260*	0.744	0.000	
	True Greens	-0.972*	0.602	0.000	

To understand whether there is a significant difference among clusters in terms of environmental concern, One-Way ANOVA was applied. For environmental concern variable, group variances are homogenous ($p > 0.05$) so prerequisite of ANOVA was provided. As a result of the test, it is determined that there is a significant difference among clusters ($F(2)=255.133; p=0.000$).

Table 11: Levene Test for the Relationship between Environmental Concern and Clusters

	Levene Statistic	d.f.1	d.f.2	p value
Environmental Concern	2.903	2	257	0.055

In order to understand which group caused this difference, Tukey test was used. True Greens have higher levels of environmental concern when compared to Non-Greens ($\mu_{\text{true greens}}=3.6844; \mu_{\text{non-greens}}=1.9970$).

Table 12: ANOVA between Environmental Concern and Clusters

		N	Means	F value	p value
Environmental Concern	Non-Greens	52	1.9970	255.133	0.000
	True Greens	96	3.6844		
	Moderately Greens	112	2.9467		
	Total	260	3.0167		
Tukey Results		Mean Difference	Standard Error	p value	
Non-Greens	True Greens	-1.687*	0.813	0.000	
	Moderately Greens	-0.049*	0.825	0.000	
True Greens	Non-Greens	1.687*	0.813	0.000	
	Moderately Greens	0.737*	0.511	0.000	
Moderately Greens	Non-Greens	0.949*	0.825	0.000	
	True Greens	-0.737*	0.511	0.000	

To understand whether there is a significant difference among clusters in terms of environmental attitude, One-Way ANOVA was applied. For environmental attitude variable, group variances are homogenous ($p > 0.05$) so prerequisite of ANOVA was provided. As a result of the test, it is determined that there is a significant difference among clusters ($F(2)=212.454$; $p=0.000$).

Table 13: Levene Test for the Relationship between Environmental Attitude and Clusters

	Levene Statistic	d.f.1	d.f.2	p value
Environmental Attitude	1.113	2	257	0.067

In order to understand which group caused this difference, Tukey test was used. True Greens have higher levels of environmental attitude when compared to Non-Greens ($\mu_{\text{true greens}}=3.4810$; $\mu_{\text{non-greens}}=2.6174$).

Table 14: ANOVA between Environmental Attitude and Clusters

		N	Means	F value	p value
Environmental Attitude	Non-Greens	52	1.6575	212.454	0.000
	True Greens	96	3.4810		
	Moderately Greens	112	2.6174		
	Total	260	2.9771		
Tukey Results		Mean Difference	Standard Error	p value	
Non-Greens	True Greens	-1.823*	0.832	0.000	
	Moderately Greens	-0.959*	0.845	0.000	
True Greens	Non-Greens	1.823*	0.832	0.000	
	Moderately Greens	0.863*	0.523	0.000	
Moderately Greens	Non-Greens	0.959*	0.845	0.000	
	True Greens	-0.863*	0.523	0.000	

To understand whether there is a significant difference among clusters in terms of price sensitivity, One-Way ANOVA was applied. For price sensitivity variable, group variances are homogenous ($p > 0.05$) so prerequisite of ANOVA was provided. As a result of the test, it is determined that there is a significant difference among clusters ($F(2)=428.203$; $p=0.000$).

Table 15: Levene Test for the Relationship between Price Sensitivity and Clusters

	Levene Statistic	d.f.1	d.f.2	p value
Price Sensitivity	2.743	2	257	0.638

In order to understand which group caused this difference, Tukey test was used. Non-Greens have higher levels of price sensitivity when compared to True Greens ($\mu_{\text{true greens}}=1.8691$; $\mu_{\text{non-greens}}=4.1638$).

Table 16: ANOVA between Price Sensitivity and Clusters

		N	Means	F value	p value
Price Sensitivity	Non-Greens	52	4.1638	428.203	0,000
	True Greens	96	1.8691		
	Moderately Greens	112	2.7186		
	Total	260	2.9989		
Tukey Results		Mean Difference	Standard Error	p value	
Non-Greens	True Greens	2.294*	0.709	0.000	
	Moderately Greens	1.445*	0.712	0.000	
True Greens	Non-Greens	-2.294*	0.709	0.000	
	Moderately Greens	-0.849*	0.723	0.000	
Moderately Greens	Non-Greens	-1.445*	0.712	0.000	
	True Greens	0.849*	0.723	0.000	

To understand whether there is a significant difference among clusters in terms of green purchase intention, One-Way ANOVA was applied. For green purchase intention variable, group variances are homogenous ($p>0.05$) so prerequisite of ANOVA was provided. As a result of the test, it is determined that there is a significant difference among clusters ($F(2)=401.996$; $p=0.000$).

Table 17: Levene Test for the Relationship between Green Purchase Intention and Clusters

	Levene Statistic	d.f.1	d.f.2	p value
Green Purchase Intention	3.2478	2	257	0.743

In order to understand which group caused this difference, Tukey test was used. True Greens have higher levels of green purchase intention when compared to Non-Greens ($\mu_{\text{true greens}}=4.1018$; $\mu_{\text{non-greens}}=1.6530$).

Table 18: ANOVA between Green Purchase Intention and Clusters

		N	Means	F value	p value
Green Purchase Intention	Non-Greens	52	1.6530	401.996	0,000
	True Greens	96	4.1018		
	Moderately Greens	112	3.2085		
	Total	260	3.3604		
Tukey Results		Mean Difference	Standard Error	p value	
Non-Greens	True Greens	-2.448*	0.709	0.000	
	Moderately Greens	-1.555*	0.712	0.000	
True Greens	Non-Greens	2.448*	0.709	0.000	
	Moderately Greens	0.893*	0.723	0.000	
Moderately Greens	Non-Greens	1.555*	0.712	0.000	
	True Greens	-0.893*	0.723	0.000	

The findings of this study support previous researches by especially affirming the characteristics of True green and Non-Green consumer categories determined by Hanas (2007) and Peattie (1992). The results are also in compliance with former studies that form similar green consumer types (Apaydin and Szczepaniak, 2017; He, Cai, Deng and Li, 2015; Paço, Raposa and Filho, 2009; Wagner, 2003).

5. CONCLUSION

In this study, it is aimed to segment Generation Y consumers based on their green purchase intention. According to the result, it is revealed that, these consumers are scattered over three clusters. First cluster named "Non-Greens" have the lowest score of environmental knowledge, environmental concern, environmental attitude and green purchase intention except for price sensitivity. Since their price sensitivity levels are quite high, there are unwilling to buy relatively high-priced green products. Second cluster named "True Greens" have the highest scores of environmental knowledge, environmental concern, environmental attitude and green purchase intention. They have the lowest value of price sensitivity showing that they are eager to pay extra for green products. Third cluster named "Moderately Greens" have average rates for all mentioned variables including price sensitivity. This group has a tendency to buy green products provided that their buying attempts are encouraged.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature of consumer behavior by exploring Generation Y consumer segments based on green purchase intention along with creating opportunity to understand how seriously price sensitivity affects their green purchase intention that could lead to potential actual purchase if circumstances were changed. Practically, it provides insights into consumer groups' inclinations for marketers to help them formulate strategies to flourish green product sales. Running promotional campaigns for green products can be an effective tool that might help to encourage the purchase intention of Moderately Green consumers.

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