AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON THE INFLUENCE OF ADVERTISEMENTS AND PRODUCT PROMOTIONS ON GREEN BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN NEPAL

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ABSTRACT

In the 21st century, various trends and technologies are taking over the innovative approach to a marketing phenomenon. Green marketing is one of the merging tools which is used by various organizations as an essential part of their marketing strategies. Government and marketers are working and adapting new strategies for sustainability and eco-friendly approaches for consumers. Consumers are becoming aware and mindful of their choices and have been choosing the products the replacement of normal products. This research focuses on the constructs within the advertisements and product promotion segments such as green communication, channels used in promotion, green marketing tools, and willingness to pay to influence the green buying behavior of the consumers in Nepal. The online survey was done by distributing the questionnaire and using 5-Likert scale for the analysis. The scale shows the reliability of the study and how the consumers and potential consumers of the various cities of Nepal react to the various marketing strategies focusing on green strategies. Directions for further future research and recommendations are also mentioned to enhance the implications of this research.

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of Green Marketing arose in the late 1980s as a trend more of in a competitive way, that organizations opted to adapt to distinguish themselves, offering green value recommendations to draw and retain consumers.

Not a few but many transformations have happened all around the globe, and huge organizations have taken steps toward the adaptation of green marketing. Here are a few stats:

- McDonald's substituted its clamshell packaging with waxed paper as there was an increased consumer concern relating to polystyrene production and Ozone - layer depletion creating global environmental concerns (Gifford, 1991).
- Tuna manufacturers altered and modified their fishing techniques because of the increased concern over driftnet fishing, and the resulting death of dolphins (Roberts, 1991).
- Xerox introduced a "high quality" recycled photocopier paper so that they can satisfy the demands of firms for less environmentally harmful products.

Green buying behavior is the concept of purchasing sustainable and environmentally friendly products; concerning the products to be recyclable and beneficial to the environment and hence, bypassing the products which are harmful to society and the environment. A strong elevation has emerged in the phenomena of "environmentalism" in today's generation and an optimistic change can be seen towards the perceived value related to environmental products and in the behavior of consumers of green products due to augmented rank of environmental awareness which has been there since the 1970s (Pitts, 1996).

According to American Marketing Association, green marketing is the marketing of products, by ensuring environmental safety and, all the measures taken by an establishment for production, promotion, packaging, product modification, and introduction of new technologies are required to be responsive to ecological concerns. Activities and initiatives involving minimum destructive impact on nature to satisfy human needs and wants provides the ideation of green marketing (Polonsky, 1994). Marketing is not only about promoting and then selling services or goods but a powerful tool that also strives to intercommunicate, educate and also influence society. Global warming, pollution, climate change, and its effects have been concerning the entire world and hence bringing more awareness amongst consumers in terms of environmental challenges which they have been facing. All of these environmental challenges have gained immense importance in the public domain as well as the business environment. All these critical global issues intertwined with the consumer's demand for green products have ushered in the emergence of green marketing (McKenzie-Mohr, 2011).

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Sustainability and going green is not just a mere trend in Nepal, it developed to become more than that. People are realizing that going green is very important in terms of sustainability as well. There has been continuous support from non-profit and profit organizations for the conduction of various eco-fair, seminars, and awareness programs for the same. There are various green initiatives made by various organizations all over Nepal. Laxmi Bank has installed solar lights on the main Bridge of Bagmati, supermarkets, and departmental stores like BhatBhateni replacing the use of polythene bags with cloth bags, companies like Dabur Nepal opting for eco-packaging, and more. These initiatives have brought a fair change in terms of benefits for the organizations as well (Shrestha, 2016).

Green marketing is not only limited to advertising and promoting products and services with environmental factors. The terms such as recycling, and environmentally friendly are associated with this concept. This concept also includes product modification, alterations in the production process, adaptation of the brand (like logo, and packaging), and change in the approach of advertising. It has created a revolution in perspective to the general vision of marketing. It also indicates the results of marketing activities that impact the degradation of the environment, energy consumption, and pollution. It includes having the minimum harm and impact in the environment along with customer satisfaction (Fonseca, 2015).

Once the marketers depict the concept of "green products" through their creativity, there comes the commitment of consumers to actually be able to distinguish between various contending products and brands as per their choice. As per the marketers, in terms of likeability with regard to consumers, various options regarding green advertising can be entertained and adapted. The information depicted by the marketers should be well-put and in a creative manner so that the customer realizes the importance of such information conveyed to him/her through different mediums of advertisement (Sabir, 2014).

According to the researchers and their various studies, consumers who develop the positive attitude towards advertising would respond positively towards the promotion and advertising of green products. The information depicted via various sources and channels of advertisement and promotions plays an important role positively towards the consumption of green products (Sabir, 2014).

In particular, the objective of this study is to examine and evaluate the influence of marketing tools like advertisement and promotion on buying behavior of green products ascertaining the variables that are responsible and hence helping organizations and marketers to develop proper marketing strategies (Jun-Hwa Cheah, 2019).

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2. OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study is to examine the influence of advertisement and promotion on buying behavior of green products in Nepal. To have a more exploratory and elaborative study; the researcher chose the marketing tools such as advertisements and promotions. To authenticate and establish a strong framework; for the variable advertisement, the constructs such as willingness to buy and green communication will be used. Similarly for the variable promotions; the constructs such as channels of promotions and green marketing tools will be used.

- To study the effects of green communication on green buying behavior.
- To examine whether there is a significant relationship between willingness to buy and green buying behavior.
- To assess the influence of channels of promotion and green buying behavior.
- To investigate the influence of Green Marketing Tools on green buying behavior.

3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Advertisement and Green buying behavior

The concept of green marketing is exponentially increasing in various countries which have influenced the perceived value of consumers and hence ultimately diverting into buying green products (Wahid, Investigation of green marketing tools' effect on consumers' purchase behavior, 2017). Marketers should understand the ecological knowledge in their companies, their products, and their way of advertising to accomplish the goal of affecting the consumer's willingness to buy green products (Khare, 2014). When consumers pay attention to the information about the environmental warning while seeing an advertisement, the conditional value will affect consumer choice behavior regarding green products (Lin, 2012).

In terms of the response to advertisements, green marketing communications influences the perception of green brand trust, green brand support, and purchase intentions (Ainsworth Anthony Bailey, 2016).

H01: While advertising, willingness to buy and green communication negatively affects the green buying behavior.

H1: While advertising, willingness to buy and green communication positively affects the green buying behavior.

Promotion and Green buying behavior

Environmental awareness, green product features, green promotion activities, and green prices affect the green purchasing behaviors of the consumers in a positive way (Boztepe, 2012). Brand, product quality, price, promotion, product diversity, quality of service, and channels of promotion in the marketing environment influence consumers' purchasing behavior (Sidek,

2016). Various factors in promotion like the mode of promotion, advertising slogans, expression of various features in the promotion campaign, and techniques have a positive effect on

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consumers' intent to purchase (Ansari, 2011).

Green marketing tools played a significant role in inducing a positive purchase intention toward green products (Shrestha, 2018). The provision of negligence information while promoting heightens consumer concern for safety and firms' ethical behavior and increases the proportion of consumer choices in favor of the brands sold by manufacturers with a favorable track record for quality (Curlo, 1999).

 H_02 : While doing promotions, green marketing tools and channels of promotion negatively affects the green buying behavior.

H2: While doing promotions, green marketing tools and channels of promotion positively affects the green buying behavior.

4. SIGNIFICANCE OS THE STUDY

Green purchasing can bring important benefits for its practitioners: risk management, ecoefficiency, stronger supplier relationships, and improvements in environmental performance, just as a start (Livio D. DeSimone, 2000). Hence, it is very much important to study the factors affecting the Green Buying Behavior of consumers (Yatish Joshia, 2015). Marketers and organizations will get to know how they can transform their marketing strategies to influence the customer's green buying behavior (Ottman, 2017).

5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research is set to focus on the study of various moderating variables like age, gender, income, education, occupation, and price affecting green buying behavior in Nepal. The study concentrates on constructs such as willingness to buy and green communication in the advertisement sector, channels of promotion, and green marketing tools in the promotion sector, and how these variables influence green buying behavior in developing country like Nepal. The research will showcase the perception of the ecologically conscious behavior of consumers.

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The thesis cannot cover all issues related to broad spectrum of entire marketing, it is going to concentrate only on the green aspects of marketing' being advertisements, and promotions and their influences on consumers' purchase decisions and buying behavior. The buying behaviors affected by other components such as logistics management and shopping methods (in-store or online shopping) are not taken into consideration.

This research is based on the study of practices aimed at green advertising, where advertising strategies were recorded through content and media associated with the environment. In this way, the promotion of products and services is sought through the influence of celebrities committed to the environment, advertising focused on spirituality and ethics, green advertising,

green advertising design, use of rewards (monetary, donations), and motivation of green consumption.

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Regarding the relationship between these GM practices and the key variables of purchasing behavior, the studies analyzed show the following results: (a) increase in the intention to purchase green products; (b) green satisfaction; (c) social influence through the recommendation of green products or services; (d) active environmental concern; (e) development of a self-image committed to ecology; and (f) positive environmental attitudes. One more important point is that the survey is going to collect primary data with the population targeting Nepal and it does not include Nepalese residing in any other country. The study of post-purchase behavior of consumers remains to be analyzed and studied.

7. LITERATURE REVIEW

Advertisement

Willingness to buy

One of the best ways to reduce or minimize skepticism in a consumer's persona is green brand communication. When people get aware of the environmental impact of products and relate to them more, they tend to have a positive evaluation of the brands in the phenomenon of shared value and perceived benefit; which ultimately have a positive impact on the relationship between willingness to buy and higher purchase intention (Jialing Catherine Lin, 2020).

• Green Communication

The major motive of companies or organizations' green communication is to make their consumers more aware of green products and esteem the mindset of companies as environmentally friendly and sustainable hence deciding to buy their products. Currently, in several countries all across the globe, manufacturers sell green products and develop marketing strategies to showcase to consumers their concern for the environment and ongoing environmental problems (Sara Sousa, 2022).

Promotions

Channels of Promotions

According to the study, that was conducted in terms of people getting concerned about the channels of information used for promotion; it was stated that the major source was TV, the internet, followed by the newspaper. The Internet is one of the most essential pathways for communicating information related to the environment and hence making people aware and conscious (Hui-hui Zhao, 2013).

Green Marketing Tools

While using various marketing tools, it was analyzed that words such as "eco-friendly," "recycled," and "green" and the symbols related to recycling, and reusing, on product packaging or promotion help brands and organizations disseminate a green image and hence it affects the positive perceived value of consumers (Johnson, Levine, Smith, & Stone, 2010).

Distributing and promoting green products via specific green channels affects the perceived quality of an offering in a positive way. This is very important as concerned authorities should make a wise decision and how they are going to add value by selecting green distributors over non-green distributors (Strutton, 2014).

8. THEORIES AND MODELS

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB Model) was used in one study where the model was used to analyze green purchase behavior and also to study how a company's green communication positively influences the intentions of green purchasing. According to the TBP model, individuals' behavioral determinations are directly affected by their own intentions, which maybe be affected by perceived behavioral control, subjective norms, and attitudes. This model is widely used in the area of research related to green products and the environment (Sara Sousa, 2022).

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The green messages used in the green transparency strategy, where various information was provided to the consumers related to low-carbon reports, eco-labeling and more communicate the self-determination theory. With the same theory, a conceptual model is introduced outlining how consumers take and process green communications and how it is affecting the brand attachment and their willingness to buy the green product (Jialing Catherine Lin, 2020). In the paper "Analyzing the impact of green marketing strategies on consumer purchasing patterns in Mauritius" by (Juwaheer, 2012), comprehensive model was designed to show green marketing as an independent variable that affects the purchasing intention of consumers. The moderating variables were age, occupation, gender, price, income, and education. Hence, the study showed how green marketing tools positively affected the consumer's perception of green products enhancing environmental awareness (Shrestha, 2018).

9. RESEARCH GAPS AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

- All the previous studies have made their study on broad environmental brands and hence no research has been done for a particular brand or product (John Thøgersen, 2012).
- Various studies had financial limits and even the data was not completely reliable and relevant (Antonio Chamorro, 2007).
- There has been no study related to the brand's green practice history and familiarity. The
 conceptual models proposed in various papers had location limitation and hence has not been
 generalized into the context of culture and alternate industries so as to attain generalizability
 (Hadi Moradi, 2012).
- Most of the data has been collected by online mediums for collection and analysis purposes (Reich, 2015).
- Due to time constraints, a comprehensive study was not possible to understand the relationship between the green industries and the firm introducing green products (Markus Grillitsch, 2019).
- The search engine method has not been considered and hence the meta-analysis of the trends in the digital world is not studied due to constant change in data. (Elizabeth Emperatriz García-Salirrosas, 2022)

10. METHODOLOGY

This study confides the influence of green advertising and promotions of green products. The approach used is based on how consumers are intrigued to buy the products and services with the organizations that have proved their green credibility via various ways of advertisements, conducting web campaigns, communicating transparently, and publishing sustainability reports. Consumers in both contexts of an industrial and individual database are getting aware and concerned about the environment. Hence, we will explore various variables that affect the willingness to buy green products. This study will focus on the data collected and the reaction of the consumers and operationally see the result considering the working of variables, opting for a pragmatic approach.

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This study is going to follow a deductive approach, where the inferences are going to be derived about how various variables influence the willingness to buy green products. The primary data will be used for the study and it will be collected via multiple sources, also because primary data is the best source of information for the study.

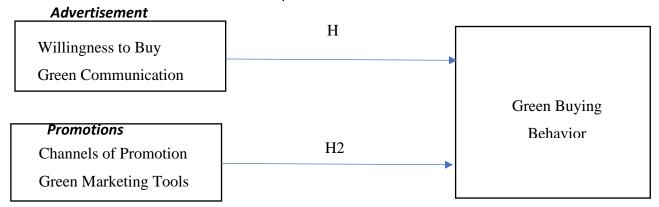


Figure 1: Hypothesized predictors of green buying behavior

The theoretical framework for this study will consist of two independent variables:

- Advertisement: Under this variable, there will be study of two constructs;
- Willingness to Buy
- Green Communication
- 2. Promotions: Under this variable, there will be study of yet again two constructs as:
- Channels of Promotion
- Green Marketing Tools

The research used the descriptive research strategy where it is inferred that all variable affects the opinion, behavior, and attitude toward the willingness to buy green products. The questionnaire is structured and there are pre-determined options given to justify the research's quantitative nature.

This research is exploratory research where the data is collected by questionnaire via digital medium and hence the result is depicted in a numerical format through multi variant regression. Careful analysis and study of the effects of variables and the constructs such as advertisement and promotion's effects on the willingness of consumers to buy green product is conducted.

Various studies have showcased the impact of advertising, promotions, and marketing mix on the purchasing behavior of green products. The questionnaire for the research has been adopted from previous studies which would guide and give directions to this research in a systematic way.

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The data is collected via questionnaire would then is analyzed and calculated with IBM's SPPS and visualizations would be done.

This research is conducted by collecting data through questionnaires without influencing variables amongst a group of people. This data is collected within a single point in time from individuals so as to study the prevalence of data. The variables studied in this research are adopted from previous research and studies. Hence, the cross-sectional approach is used for this study.

This research is contributing to understanding the influence of various advertisements and promotions on the green buying behavior of consumers. Respondents were also asked about their demographic background consisting of age, gender, current location, and marital status. This is collected by providing multiple choice and for other adopted questions, the measurement is done using 5 points Linkert Scale.

Pre-testing of the questionnaire is done on the basis of 75 respondents across various cities in Nepal. Pilot Study is conducted on 75 respondents for testing Reliability of the scale. The basic questionnaire was provided to 150 respondents for the pilot study to frame the final questionnaire.

The self-administered standard questionnaire adopted various scholars working on the said variables. For measuring Advertisement, the researcher utilized variables i.e., willingness to pay and green communication which has been adopted from (Bisai, 2018) and (Arminda do Paço, 2019) with 0.94 to 0.92 to 0.95 Cronbach value respectively. For Promotion the researcher utilized variables i.e., channels of promotion and green marketing tools which has been adopted from (Hung L. a., 2021) and (Papadas, 2019) with Cronbach value of 0.79 and 0.78 respectively. These are all the accepted and reliable value of Cronbach Alpha for the variables as the value is >0.7.

The sampling method used in this research is convenience sampling which lies in non-probability sampling; where the units and data are included as per the availability and easy inclusion. This sampling method was chosen due to geographical immediacy, time constraints, and also considering the willingness of the participants and the national context. The respondents who filled out the questionnaire with the help of the URL provided their responses and hence the responses were included in the sampling process to study the error and accuracy and hence draw the results out of it. The sampling frame is generated to proceed with the sampling.

The age group that are targeted will be 13 to 50 as the Generation – Z, Millennials and Generation - X are holding the majority of responses. There is an analysis of how these generations are reacting to advertisements and promotions related to green products and how various variables affects the purchasing behavior of green consumers. There is no monetary compensation provided to respondents attending the survey.

The data is collected via the URL of Google Form and it is linked to the Gmail account. After respondents submit their responses, they are stored in the database of the email. The data is

accessed via Google Sheet and it will be in raw format. Then the collected data was cleaned for further processing of the data.

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The sampling of data consisted of Nepalese residing in various cities - Biratnagar, Birgunj, Butwal, Dhangadhi, Dharan, Janakpur, Kathmandu and Pokhara of Nepal. The URL was provided to all the respondents and hence they viewed the entire questionnaire within that URL. The collected data is then cleaned and structured for proper analysis and evaluation.

After the collection of the data; validation, editing, and coding is done. After the processing of the data, inferential statistics was used to gain inference about various hypotheses that have been generated for this research. This showcased the relationship between the independent variable and with dependent variable instead of studying just a single variable.

The data was analyzed using IBM's SPPS Statistics 26 for evaluation and reporting. Various charts and graphs were used for visualization purposes for a better understanding of data.

11. DATA ANALYSIS

The study was to evaluate the influence of advertisements and product promotions on green buying behavior (a dependent variable) in Nepal where advertisements and product promotions (Independent variable). The major purpose of this study being an exploratory study is to explore the relationship between its components, green buying behavior being one dependent variable and there are two independent variables with four constructs; willingness to buy and green communication under advertisements and green marketing tools and channels of promotion under product promotions. The major technique for gathering information from respondents was the questionnaire which was distributed via google form. The questionnaire included multiple choice questions and close-end questions. For the close-ended questions the respondents were expected to choose from strongly agree to strongly disagree having the base of Likert Scale. This particular technique was chosen because it has various advantages, easy to collect, effective and efficient implementation, high responsiveness and faster distribution.

The researched personally generated the questionnaire and distributed the questions to the respondents via internet. The questionnaire was circulated all over Nepal via various mediums like WhatsApp, E-mails, Viber, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. For the pilot study the questionnaire was sent to 100 respondents out of which 75 respondents did fill the questionnaire. After the successful test of the questionnaire, the questionnaire was then distributed to 510 respondents in order to achieve high response rate. As stated above, for the current study, the sample size of 400 to 510 is appropriate, whereas the obtained replies were 473 out of which, 450 data were usable and sufficient for the study and complete the analysis. For the preliminary data screening, 23 were rejected because they were not correctly filled and was not thoroughly completed by the relevant respondents, and hence were excluded and discarded for future research.

Reliability Analysis

After the collection of the responses from the people, the test was conducted and performed using Cronbach's coefficient alpha to determine how error-free the items of the study were from random mistakes and to also check the dependability of the items i.e. how strong or weak the dependability is amongst the items. Cronbach's alpha is actually the measure of the internal

consistency of the items, that is, how closely related a set of items is as a group. The reliability coefficient of this measure normally ranges from 0 to 1. The closer the Cronbach alpha's value is to 1.0 the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale. For this study, dependability findings are show below in tabular format:

Variables of the study	No. of items	Cronbach Alpha
Green Buying Behavior (DV)	3	0.868
Willingness to Buy (IV)	3	0.922
Green Communication (IV)	4	0.890
Green Marketing Tools (IV)	3	0.896
Channels of Promotion (IV)	3	0.962

Table 1: Reliability Result

As per the data presented in the table above, the Cronbach Alpha value for dependent and independent variables is more than 0.8. The Cronbach Alpha score for both the dependent and independent variables vary from 0.862 to 0.962. The reliability statistics of the dependent variable and independent variables are adequate for the inspection, as a consequence of obtained result.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple Regression Analysis signifies the strong association of the dependent variables and independent variables. The correlation coefficient "r" values shown are more than 0.20. All the independent variables are depicted to be positively related to the dependent variable i.e., Green Buying Behavior. As per the value of the sig for all the dependent and independent variables studied was 0.000(0.000p of 0.01), pointing and indicating that there is the establishment of substantial relationship between the dependent and the independent variable. As a result, it is reasonable to come to the conclusion that Willingness to Buy, Green Marketing Tools, Channels of Promotion and Green Communication influences the Green Buying Behavior. After this analysis, the researcher will be able to justify all the research objectives and answer all the research questions as per stated in Chapter 1. The results of the regression analysis are presented in three tables i.e., Model Summary, ANOVA and Coefficient table.

12. EVALUATION

The concept of green buying behavior is emerging in Nepal and that being said people and consumers are being aware about the environmental problems and conscious with their choices. The eco-friendly attributes of the products affect the willingness to buy and hence influencing the purchasing behavior of consumers. The feeling of making sustainable choices and protection of the environment adds up to the green buying behavior of consumers. The green marketing tools has the significant effect on the purchase intention of the green products. The findings also suggests that the advertisements strongly affects the green buying behavior of consumers. The message depicted via advertisements and the information with respect to environmental consumers increases the brand awareness as well as awareness with regards to

sustainable choices. Green brand knowledge and green communication increases the customers trust towards environmental concerns.

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The age group 24 to 35 are highly enthusiasts in terms of this research. This is because this generation of consumers are highly experimental and ready to make changes with respect to their choices. The age group is also highly active in terms digital communication medium and hence are also very much excited about the promotional activities. The consumers of this age group are very well aware about their choices and the wave of sustainability hits differently which affects their green buying behavior.

The majority of the respondents are from Kathmandu city because Kathmandu is the capital city of Nepal hence people of the capital city are already very much into purchase of green products and they have their own opinions with regards to their choices. The consumers of Kathmandu areas are also the major target group in terms of advertisements and promotions for all the marketers. This is also because Kathmandu people have better and easy access to plenty of resources even if they want to switch to any of green products.

The majority of the respondents in this study where unmarried as unmarried people are highly influenced by promotional activities and advertisements which are highly informative and attractive compared to married people. The area where the questionnaire was distributed were majorly freshly graduated and about to get admission into further studies program. Unmarried people are highly influenced with green marketing strategies as they have higher tendencies to experiment with their choices and are ready to choose different products.

From section 4.3.5.6, 4.3.5.7 and 4.3.5.9, it can illustrated that green advertisements are catchy and attractive which influences consumer's willingness to buy as they get attracted to products and get curious about the products and hence incline towards the willingness to buy the product. The attractive environmental advertisement encourages people to buy green products because they attract the people and influence their purchasing decision as they showcase the environmental concern and how to do their bit by being mindful and making wiser choices. Appealing eco-friendly packages attracts people to read the message on the labels and influence them to choose products for the better of the environment and also healthy for themselves. In this era of digitization, where world is being a global village people are constantly being aware about new trends and technologies. People have been getting more conscious with choices and sustainability, adapting with the concept of e-commerce as it is more eco-friendly. People also tend to choose e-commerce as they get more choices and more descriptive analysis of the products and hence enough time to make wise decision. With reference to section 4.3.5.11, respondents are highly inclined towards digital communication methods used by the organizations for product promotions as there is positive impact of brand's image in the concept of green image and sustainability hence making the statement that they are concerned about the environment and want to make decisions respecting the same. With less use of resources and ease, digital communication is more-ecofriendly. People prefer products and services which have recycled or reusable materials as it helps in conservation of energy and resources, reduces the negative impact of harmful chemicals and extractions that has on the environment and also lowering green house emission.

13. CONCLUSION

The objective of this research was to analyze the relationship between its components, green buying behavior is one dependent variable and there are two independent variables with four constructs; willingness to buy and green communication under advertisements and green marketing tools and channels of promotion under product promotions. The research includes multiple sections to properly evaluate the study of variables and their influence. The research objectives were set to understand the relationship and significance of the research topic. The result implies that there is a positive relationship between the presented variables in this research. The variables of willingness to buy and green marketing tools have the highest amount of influence on the consumer's green buying behavior. The proper implications, recommendations, and limitations have been given in this research concerning the topic.

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