

Original Article

Positive Emotions on Green Purchase Behaviour - An Analysis of College Students in Kerala

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Abstract - The development of green products and sustainable growth will be positively impacted by the identification and assessment of positive emotions that influence college students' green purchasing behaviour. The purpose of the study is to examine the effect of positive emotions on consumers' decisions to purchase green products. The study sample consists of college students in Kerala, selected by the random sampling method. Data were collected through questionnaires, and Jamovi and Amos analyzed these. The study's conclusions show that positive emotions have a greater influence on green purchase behaviour, and the effect of gender on these behaviours is not statistically significant.

Keywords - Awe, Contentment, Emotions, Green purchase behaviour, Interest, Joy, Love, Pride, Satisfaction.

1. Introduction

Over the past few decades, global population growth and market dynamics have significantly influenced human consumption patterns [1]. These consumption habits caused environmental degradation—such as increased pollution and global warming—and also disrupted the composition of flora and fauna, leading to long-lasting consequences for both present and future generations [2]. Recognizing these challenges, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development emphasizes that focusing solely on economic growth is insufficient. Instead, it advocates for the creation of safer, more prosperous communities and a more equitable and inclusive planet. Hence, the economy, society, and environment are the pillars of sustainability. Therefore, it suggested that development must involve all individuals everywhere, and be built through their active participation. Thereby achieve the preservation of resources. In response to these challenges, governments and respective authorities have been trying to take initiatives through which awareness could be developed in society. As a result, consumers worldwide are increasingly recognizing the importance of environmental protection. This shift is reflected in their attitudes, values, and needs, as well as in the ways and means by which these needs are met. Consequently, consumer behaviour is evolving, with a growing demand for environmentally friendly products [3]. Adopting environmentally responsible behaviour, particularly through the consumption of green products, offers a valuable opportunity to mitigate and address many of the current environmental issues [4] [5] [6] [7]. Consumers could be

active participants in the sustainability movement by changing their purchase behaviour and mindset [8]. This study is intended to evaluate the green purchase behaviour of college students in Kerala. To create economic growth that is both socially and environmentally sustainable, young people must be aware of the facts. [9]. Since college students are the representatives of the current and near-future generations, it makes sense to study their behaviour [10]. They are probably going to be concerned about the environmental effects, as they are the ones who are going to suffer them in the future. Their concern for equity between and within generations makes them the best cohort [9]. Redistributing resources fairly is known as equity. Every generation—past, present, and future—holds the earth fairly in common, according to the intergenerational equity principle. Intragenerational equity, a key driver of environmental and behavioural change, refers to the concept of fairness and justice within relationships among individuals of the current generation, including children, youth, adults, and seniors [6] [11] [12] [13]. It emphasizes equitable treatment and interactions across these age groups [14] [15]. It suggested that the current generation should responsibly use and conserve natural resources for future generations. Concurrently, customers are becoming more conscious about buying eco-friendly goods and materials [16]. The growing concern for environmental sustainability and increased demand for green consumerism may put pressure on large corporations to uphold social responsibility by promoting eco-friendly goods and services available to those seeking to maintain a competitive edge in the marketplace



[17]. Moreover, with the aim of developing an attitude towards the environment, the government has been implementing different courses and extracurricular activities among the student community. This enables them to think wisely and make decisions. Marketing has a crucial role in shaping consumer behaviour. Hence, marketers ought to make an effort to improve young people's feelings about eco-friendly products. Consumers responded to their emotions [18] [19] [20]. Therefore, they are focussing on creating content that could be capable of gaining the consumers' attention by evoking emotions. Positive emotions are promising interventions to improve long-term behaviour [21] [22] [23] [24] [25]. However, while many studies have explored the components that drive green purchase behaviour, the importance of emotions, particularly positive emotions, remains unexplored. The research would be enabled to fill the gap by examining how positive emotions affect college students' green purchasing behaviour in Kerala. The current investigation aims to address the subsequent research questions, "How does Green Purchase Behaviour (GPB) respond to positive emotions?" and "Does gender significantly affect GPB?" The study provides insight to marketers and policymakers about the influence of positive emotions on green purchase behaviour and its variation as per gender. Furthermore, it also enables them to design better strategies that appeal to the emotional drivers and develop consumers' rational concerns that motivate sustainable consumption.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), by Icek Ajzen, is a widely used framework that describes the factors that drive an individual's intentions and their corresponding behaviours. According to TPB, behavioural intentions are influenced by three factors: attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. An individual's positive or negative evaluation towards a particular behaviour is called attitude. It is the outcome of salient behavioural beliefs, which are perceptions about the likely consequences of the behaviour. For instance, a person may believe that purchasing eco-friendly products will reduce environmental pollution, leading to a positive attitude towards this behaviour. Subjective norms are influenced by normative beliefs that detail one's perception of expectations and preferences of social groups. For example, a person might feel compelled to buy eco-friendly products if they perceive that their friends and relatives approve of this action. Perceived behavioural control is influenced by an individual's control beliefs, and it is the perception of their ability to perform a behaviour. For instance, the perceived ease of accessing eco-friendly products can significantly impact an individual's perceived control over the purchasing decision. When an individual has a positive attitude, supportive social norms, and self-confidence, then there is a higher chance to engage in a behaviour. Specifically, they perceive that significant others approve of the behaviour and when they feel that they have

the necessary resources and opportunities. While previous studies focussing on TPB have been on these cognitive aspects, numerous researchers have proposed the need for incorporating affective components, or emotions, to gain a deeper understanding of behaviour. Studies have found that affective measures of attitudes have a greater influence on intentions and behaviour. This is particularly relevant in situations where emotions can be highly influential, such as green purchasing. Positive emotions like happiness, pride, or contentment can make people more likely to adopt a favourable opinion of green products and make them more likely to buy them. Within the framework of this investigation, it is possible to interpret positive emotions as impacting the TPB's attitude component. People's intention to engage in green purchasing behaviours can be increased when they feel positive about environmental sustainability; as a result, their attitude towards such green products will be favourably enhanced.

2.2. Positive Emotions

Emotions are multifaceted and complex responses that manifest over relatively brief periods, encompassing various mental and physical components that include action impulses, cognitive processes, subjective feelings, and physiological changes [26]. They are responses to both internal and external stimuli, reflecting an individual's awareness of the ongoing situation and its meaning [27]. The emotional process takes place when an individual evaluates an event's significance consciously or unconsciously. It can be seen as aroused states of the organism that involve both conscious awareness and profound behavioural changes, including subjective experience, facial expressions, cognitive processing, and physiological alterations [28] [29]. It serves as motivational forces that prompt individuals to engage in specific actions or behaviours. Positive emotions, in particular, can enhance well-being, motivating individuals toward actions that reinforce the positive emotional state.

2.1.1. Joy

Joy is a complex emotion that intertwines with the fundamental human desires to play, explore boundaries, and express creativity. It is not merely a fleeting feeling but a profound experience that manifests across various dimensions of human behaviour—social, physical, intellectual, and artistic. Joy often arises in contexts where individuals feel a sense of safety and comfort [30], allowing them to engage in activities that require minimal effort [31]. This emotional state can also be triggered by moments of achievement or perceived progress towards personal goals, providing a sense of fulfilment and satisfaction [29] [30] [32]. "Happiness" and "joy" are interchangeably used terms in the academic discourse [31]. However, joy can be distinguished by its association with high-arousal positive emotions. It occupies a conceptual space alongside emotions such as amusement—sometimes referred to as exhilaration or mirth [33]—which often involve a playful or humorous element. Similarly, joy is

closely related to feelings of elation, a heightened state of euphoria, and gladness, which reflects a more subdued but still deeply positive emotional experience [34]. Together, these emotions contribute to a richer understanding of joy as not just a singular feeling but as part of a broader spectrum of positive emotional states that enhance well-being and personal development.

2.1.2. Interest

To enhance individuals' motivation and foster their development, interest is considered to be the most distinctive positive emotion. It stimulates exploration, opens doors to new knowledge and experiences, and facilitates personal growth. Interest is the driving force behind much of what individuals pursue, guiding their actions and decisions. It is one of the most fundamental components of learning that drives the expansion of one's knowledge base and the acquisition of new skills. By encouraging curiosity and interest leads to the accumulation of information and the development of personal competencies, enriching an individual's understanding of the world [30] [35] [36] [37].

2.1.3. Contentment

Contentment sparks a desire to relax and accept one's current situation, integrating it into a renewed perspective on oneself and the surrounding world. This emotion fosters a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of both the self and external realities. More than just a feeling of satisfaction, contentment is linked to emotional awareness that involves self-reflection and openness. This reflective state encourages individuals to appreciate their circumstances while maintaining a sense of inner peace. Typically, contentment is associated with a sense of calmness, creating a stable emotional foundation that enhances overall well-being [38].

2.1.4. Satisfaction

A sense of pleasure and contentment arises when you accomplish something or fulfil a need. Customer satisfaction, for example, results from favourable cognitive and affective evaluations of consumption outcomes, where the experience meets or exceeds expectations [39].

2.1.5. Awe

Awe occurs when individuals rapidly adjust their thinking in response to new and complex stimuli that challenge and exceed their existing understanding [40] [24]. This overwhelming sense of wonder challenges one's understanding and prompts a reevaluation of previously held concepts.

2.1.6. Love

Love is a cyclical experience of desires to play, explore, and connect with loved ones, fuelled by the presence of various positive emotions within the safety of a close, affectionate relationship. Reliability and trustworthiness would intensify this feeling [41] [24].

2.1.7. Pride

Pride is a pleasurable feeling linked to independence, self-actualization, and a sense of detachment from others [45] [46]. It is the positive assessment of one's abilities or efforts in reaching a goal [42] [43] [44].

2.1.8. Compassion

Compassion, often termed sympathy in the literature, is a fundamental element of Bowlby's [47] caregiving system. It is characterized by profound concern for the wellbeing of others and is typically triggered by signals of vulnerability, cuteness, distress, and helplessness. Compassion drives nurturing behaviours, especially towards children and significant others in need [48][49].

2.2. Positive Emotions and Green Purchase Behaviour

The emotional states of an individual, including feelings of pleasantness or unpleasantness and varying levels of arousal, shape their response to the environment [26]. The use of specific products can trigger such emotions [50] [51], services [52], cherished items [53], or within a variety of consumption contexts [54] [55] [56]. The emotions experienced by consumers are important predictors of their satisfaction and subsequent behaviours, such as repeat purchases, referrals, complaints, and word-of-mouth marketing [57] [58] [59] [39] [60] [61] [62]. It is often assessed by examining the effect of different emotions, whether it is positive or negative, during consumption [63] [64]. Szymanski and Henard [65] found that while negative emotions tend to decrease satisfaction, positive emotions generally enhance it, leading to favourable behavioural intentions.

H1: Positive emotions significantly influence green purchase behaviour.

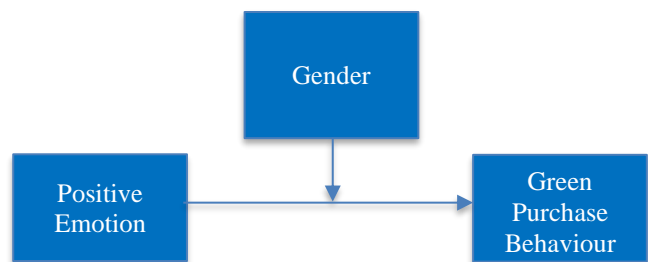


Fig. 1 Conceptual model

2.3. Gender as Moderator

Gender has been widely linked to various purchasing and consumption behaviours, and numerous studies have examined this relationship. Chang and Chieng [66] found that consumer attitudes can be predicted based on gender identity. Men and women often exhibit different behaviours in various situations due to differences in upbringing and socialization [67] [68]. For instance, Brebner [69] observed that women typically experience certain emotions with greater intensity

than men. Moreover, research by Cizel [70] shows that there are notable gender differences in adaptability and problem-solving skills, further underscoring the distinct behavioural patterns between men and women.

H2: There is a significant difference in positive emotions and green purchase behaviour across different gender identities.

H3: Gender moderates the relationship between positive emotion and green purchase behaviour.

3. Materials and Methods

A quantitative survey approach was employed to test the conceptual model (Figure 1). Primary data were collected from college students in Kerala. The empirical validation of the conceptual model began with the development of a structured questionnaire. The scale used by Kolling et al. [71] was adapted in order to measure positive emotions. Green purchase behavior was measured using a scale adapted from Kanchanapibul et al. [72].

3.1. Sample

Probability sampling was used and 384 questionnaires were administered among the college students through mail, WhatsApp chats, etc. For finding the sample size of this finite population (754624), Krejcie & Morgan's [73] method was used. The formula used to calculate the size of the sample is as follows:

$$S = \frac{X^2 \cdot N \cdot P(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + X^2 \cdot P(1-P)}$$

$$= \frac{1.96^2 * 754624 * 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.05^2 (754624 - 1) + 1.96^2 * 0.5(1-0.5)} = 384$$

From the 384 questionnaires, we only received 326 that were error-free and acceptable for the analysis.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

As shown in Table 1, the mean scores for both PE and GPB were slightly higher among female respondents compared to their male counterparts. Female participants reported mean scores of 3.48 for PE and 3.42 for GPB, whereas male participants reported mean scores of 3.24 for PE and 3.23 for GPB. Median values also reflect this trend, with female respondents consistently showing higher scores than male respondents across both variables.

4.2. Independent Samples T-Test

In order to evaluate whether there were significant differences in the mean scores of Positive Emotions (PE) and Green Purchase Behavior (GPB) between male and female participants, an independent sample t-test was performed; as shown in Table 2, the findings indicate a marginally significant difference in PE scores between male and female participants ($t = -1.90$, $df = 325$, $p = 0.058$), with females reporting somewhat higher positive emotions than males. Conversely, no significant difference was observed in GPB scores between male and female participants ($t = -1.45$, $df =$

325 , $p = 0.147$), indicating that gender may not significantly influence green purchase behavior in this sample.

Table 1. Descriptives

	Gender	PE	GPB
N	Male	138	138
	Female	189	189
Mean	Male	3.24	3.23
	Female	3.48	3.42
Standard deviation	Male	1.18	1.24
	Female	1.11	1.16

Table 2. Independent samples T-test

		Statistic	df	p
GPB	Student's t	-1.45	325	0.147
PE	Student's t	-1.90	325	0.058

Note. $H_a \mu_{Male} \neq \mu_{Female}$

4.3. Linear Regression

A linear regression analysis was performed to examine the relationships between Positive Emotions (PE), Green Purchase Behavior (GPB), and gender while controlling for potential confounding variables. The model was statistically significant overall ($F(2, 324) = 873$, $p < .001$), indicating that the predictors together explained a substantial amount of the variance in GPB. Positive emotions showed a strong positive association with GPB ($\beta = 0.9600$, $p < .001$), suggesting that individuals with higher levels of positive emotions are more likely to engage in green purchasing behaviors, thereby supporting H1. In contrast, gender did not significantly impact GPB ($\beta = -0.0393$, $p = 0.462$), indicating that positive emotions affect GPB similarly regardless of gender. This finding aligns with previous research conducted by Wang et al. [74].

4.4. Moderation Analysis

A moderation analysis was performed to assess whether gender moderates the relationship between PE and GPB. The results show that neither gender ($\beta = -0.0397$, $p = 0.452$) nor the interaction between PE and Gender ($\beta = -0.0144$, $p = 0.755$) significantly moderated the relationship between positive emotions and GPB.

Table 3. Model fit measures

Overall Model Test						
Model	R	R ²	F	df1	df2	p
1	0.918	0.843	873	2	324	< .001

Table 4. Moderation estimates

	Estimate	SE	Z	p
PE	0.9596	0.0229	41.955	< .001
Gender	-0.0397	0.0528	-0.752	0.452
PE * Gender	-0.0144	0.0461	-0.312	0.755

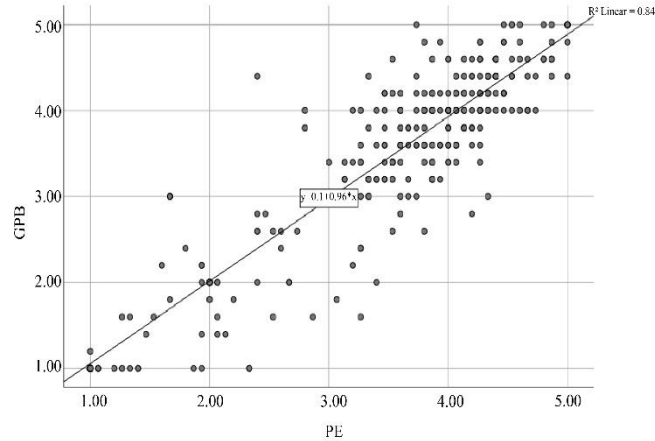


Fig. 2 Independent sample T-test

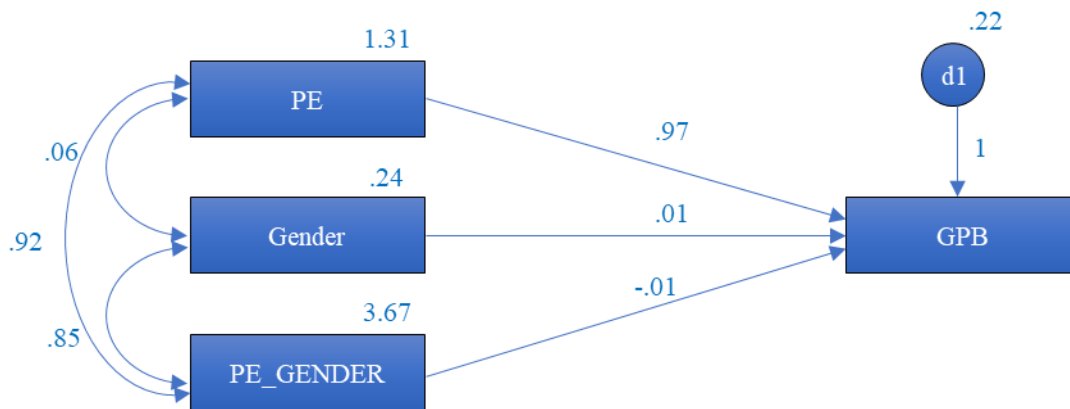


Fig. 3 Graphical moderations estimates

This comprehensive analysis shed light on the interplay between positive emotions, gender, and green purchase behaviour. While positive emotions emerged as a strong predictor of green purchase behaviour, gender did not significantly influence this relationship. These findings suggest that interventions aimed at promoting positive emotions may be effective in fostering environmentally sustainable consumer behaviours, irrespective of gender differences. This was also the case in the study done by Terrah et al. [74].

5. Findings

This study provides valuable insights into how positive emotions influence green purchase behavior. The findings indicate that positive emotions significantly influence green purchase behavior, supporting the proposed research model. Furthermore, the results suggest that gender differences do not significantly impact green purchase behavior, highlighting that both male and female participants are equally likely to engage in green purchasing practices.

6. Discussion

The existing literature indicates that positive emotions, such as cherishing, yearning, pride, and admiration, can

significantly impact consumers' green purchase behaviour [74]. Previous research has identified a dual-factor structure in environmental emotions, emphasizing the crucial role of positive emotions in driving green consumption [74]. The findings of the current study, which demonstrate a positive effect of these emotions on green purchase behaviour, align with the results of prior research. Several studies have found significant gender differences in green purchasing behaviour [76]. Women generally show more positive attitudes towards green consumption, express stronger environmental concerns, and engage in more pro-environmental behaviours compared to men [76]. But, this is contrary to the findings of this research, which found that gender differences in the youth do not influence green purchase behaviour.

7. Managerial Implications

When customers visit the store or use the products, their positive emotions are evident, and this encourages them to make more purchases and recommendations. As a result, encouraging positive customer experiences is crucial to encouraging purchases. This study enables managers to understand the significance of consumers's emotions in shaping purchase behaviour. It will assist them while planning marketing campaigns. This study enables them to understand

the importance of applying creativity and thought-provoking marketing strategies that evoke consumers' emotions positively and thereby build a positive attitude towards green products. The industry has to start some campaigns to raise awareness of the use of green products for a sustainable future and to exercise caution when designing new products. They ought to give the merchandise some added value and design an appealing interior for the store. Use social media intermediaries to promote sales both offline and online.

8. Conclusion

This study examined how positive emotions and the influence of gender differences impacted college students' green-buying behaviour. A quantitative survey was conducted among Undergraduate (UG) and Postgraduate (PG) students in Kerala, and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used to validate the proposed research model. Findings suggest that college students in Kerala are more likely to make green purchases when experiencing positive emotions. Additionally, the study revealed that gender differences did not significantly affect students' green purchase behaviour, indicating that both male and female students are equally likely to engage in purchasing green products. This study's findings revealed that businesses should focus on eliciting a positive emotional response from customers because it can strengthen other factors that encourage green buying, especially among younger consumers. The insights from this study highlight the need for stakeholders, including entrepreneurs, marketers, and

policymakers, to develop and implement creative strategies that evoke positive emotions in consumers towards green products. By targeting emotional appeals, these stakeholders can foster greater engagement and drive green purchase behaviour among consumers.

9. Limitations and Future Scope

This study's analysis may not have fully accounted for all confounding variables that could impact the link between positive emotions and green purchase behavior. Factors such as environmental attitudes, social media engagement, personal values, social group influences, income levels, and availability of eco-friendly products may have affected the findings. Future research should take these variables into account to gain a more comprehensive understanding of their roles. The study's findings are specific to college students, limiting their generalisability to other contexts and populations. The effect of positive emotions on green purchase behaviour may vary based on cultural, personal, socioeconomic, and environmental factors, suggesting that future studies should investigate these relationships in more diverse settings. Additionally, investigating the impact of negative emotions on green purchase behaviour could offer a more balanced perspective of the emotional factors driving consumer choices. Longitudinal research is also recommended to explore the long-term effects of positive emotions on green purchase behaviour, offering insights into how shifts in emotional states over time affect consumer behaviour.

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