

Green Conspicuous Consumption: The Effects of Green Marketing Strategies on Consumers' Behavior

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Master of Science

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Submitted to Ivo Ponocny

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Affidavit

I hereby affirm that this Master's Thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

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Abstract

This thesis explores the probability of people in Austria buying green products conspicuously. It focuses on the effects of green marketing tools such as green/bio/eco labels on the consumer purchasing behaviour and the feelings involved after buying such products. Nowadays, instead of assuming more responsibilities to solve issues such as the social gap, global warming, species extinction or resource exploitation, many people limit themselves to drink fair traded coffee, eat local meat, or buy hybrid cars to feel better. Ironically, individuals are now responsible for solving the world's problems through consumption and companies are, of course, eager to help by offering a very extensive line of products.

After formulating and testing several hypotheses, it is clear that green products can potentially signal high social status and their consumption is not necessarily related to environmental concerns. However, in Austria, the probability of green conspicuous consumption varies depending on gender, age, profession etc. Besides the empirical research performed in this study, extensive collections of literature regarding green consumption and conspicuous consumption have been considered for the results. Moreover, the study evaluates the effect of green marketing strategies on people's consumption behaviour and provides an overview of their preferences between regular products and products containing green/bio/eco labels.

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List of Abbreviations

CO₂: Carbon Dioxide

EU: European Union

EC: Environmental Concern

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

GHGs: Greenhouse Gases

GPI: Green Purchase Intention

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations

PCE: Perceived Consumer Effectiveness

UK: United Kingdom

US: United States

X²: Chi Squared Analysis

Green Conspicuous Consumption: The Effect of Green Marketing Strategies on Consumers' Behavior

1. Introduction

Nowadays, more people are becoming aware of current environmental issues and the effects of climate change. In efforts to mitigate these effects, many people are trying to be more responsible towards the environment, and sustainability is becoming a trend. As result, companies have been promoting what is known as "green consumerism". "Green consumerism" is about purchasing products that are environmentally friendly and do not harm the ecosystem and society as much; in other words, "green" products are made in an environmentally and socially friendly process (Gleim M. R., Smith, Andrews, & Cronin Jr., 2013). However, to what extent do companies implement these responsible practices in their production processes to categorise themselves as green companies? More importantly, how effective are green marketing strategies on the consumers' behaviour?

Many companies are implementing green business strategies in order to appeal to the ethical consumerism market, which currently is worth billions. Through green marketing strategies, firms are creating more needs and reaching out to new markets that were not available before. However, the aggregate impact on the environment is not necessarily reduced through green consumption, yet this is what companies are selling (Gunderson, 2014).

Due to technological and industrial development, there has been a huge impact on social quality of life and on the environment. Especially in the environment, the impacts have been negative and have led to resource depletion, climate change, contamination, species extinction among many other effects. Nevertheless, these issues have been addressed by governments, companies and society (Gleim, Smith, Andrews, & Cronin Jr., 2013). During the 70s, 80s and 90s there have been several initiatives to increase environmental awareness. However, in the last decade environmental concerns have risen and more programs are in place to help reduce the impact on the ecosystem (Gleim, Smith, Andrews, & Cronin Jr., 2013). These environmental concerns increased thanks to media coverage, noticeable effects on the ecosystem, NGOs operations, regulations, and green marketing strategies. As result, customers are more aware about the environment and the impact of their purchasing behaviour (Figge & Hahn, 2012).

According to Sheltzer, consumers with stronger environmental concerns tend to be involved in green consumerism in order to reduce their impact on the environment (Sheltzer, 1991). However, more recently, there are authors who doubt that the real reason why consumers buy green products is because they care for the environment or are concerned about social conditions in poorer countries

(Gary, Carolina, & Helena, 2012). Therefore, different authors have assessed green consumerism differently. On the other hand, there has been evidence that the inclusion of green strategies into a company's performance bring a lot of financial benefits. As result, green marketing strategies are intensified to reach out to the green consumerism market (Molina- Azorin, 2009). Furthermore, the adoption of green business branding and green marketing strategies has been dramatically increasing and are seen as tactics to gain competitive advantage and market share (Chen and Chai, 2010). For this reason, it is important to analyse and comprehend consumers' decision making in order to identify their real motivation to buy green products and develop strategy to reduce the aggregate environmental impact.

This research paper consists of a literature review focused on green marketing, consumer decision-making, green consumerism, conspicuous behaviour, and environmental impacts. A research question and a set of hypotheses have been formulated as well as a list of key concepts and measurements. Additionally, a research methodology was designed and specifications on how the data will be collected and analysed.

1.1. Research Question

Is Conspicuous Consumption an Aspect of Green Consumerism in Austria?

1.2. Research Aim

In this paper, Green conspicuous consumption is referred to as a way to signal social status through the consumption of "green" products. The purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between conspicuous consumption and green consumption in Austria, to analyse the effects of green marketing strategies on consumers' behaviour and whether it contributes positively to sustainable development or not.

Government and companies have been promoting green consumerism for some time now, but this paper, besides studying the different impacts it may have on the environment, also critiques the way in which the economy is growing through exponential consumption patterns. The capitalist economic system has prompted companies to reach new markets; as a result they are expanding to "ethical consumerism markets" which is a billion dollar industry. Green marketing strategies such as eco-friendly labelling, green business branding, and environmental advertising among many others, have helped companies gain competitive advantage and positively enhance their perception in the market. Green consumerism claims that shopping for products originating from environmentally and socially friendly sources can promote a progressive social change and generate a more sustainable system. But how can a sustainable system be generated through consumption? What is meant by "Green consumption" and what are the sociological implications of it? Or how do green marketing strategies impact consumers' purchasing behaviour? These are questions that will be addressed in this paper. This study will focus on the Austrian green market and the perception of its inhabitants

about Green Consumerism.

1.3. Hypotheses to be tested and gain inferences

The purpose of the hypotheses are to gain inferences about the effects of green consumption on the environment and individuals beyond what marketing leads people to believe and about the satisfaction consumers gain from purchasing this type of products. The four main hypotheses to be tested in this research are focused solely on the Austrian society and are as follows:

- People prefer green products to regular products.
- Marketing tools such as bio/eco certificates have a significant impact on consumers' decisions.
- Green consumerism creates a feeling of responsibility towards the environment.
- Green consumerism signals high social status.

In order to find an answer for the research question "Is Conspicuous Consumption an Aspect of Green Consumerism?" the following information needs to be obtained to test the above-formulated hypotheses:

- Do people prefer green products? It is important to answer this question in order to determine the perception that consumers have about environmentally friendly products. It is helpful for this research to identify which type of products consumers look to for certification labels or are more careful in terms of the environment. Additionally, it is significant to identify whether or not people are willing to pay an extra amount for green products, and if so, how much. In order to gain inferences about these questions, questionnaires are distributed containing specific points that address these queries and contribute to the accuracy of the results.
- Does green consumerism signal high social status? A section in the questionnaires can help answer this question. It is important to study the attitudes and feelings of people after they have purchased green products or what they think of when they see others doing it. The identification of this pattern is crucial in this study because it can relate conspicuous consumption to green consumerism; therefore positively contributing to the research question of this project. Analysing the data from the empirical research and performing statistical tests to identify trends and behaviours from the participants can derive this information.
- Can environmental problems be mitigated through green consumption? The information is obtained from gathering secondary data such as previous reports and studies. Looking at consumption patterns of Austria and other countries at different points in time and analysing its development is also helpful to compare charts and determine how these tendencies have changed through a certain timeframe. These consumption patterns can be observed in

different public reports such as Eurostat, the EU website, sustainability reports and many more. After patterns have been identified, further comparison and correlation with levels of CO2 emissions and GDP per capita are analysed.

- Does green consumerism create a feeling of development and responsibility towards the environment? Do people feel good when they consume green products and do not make any other efforts to mitigate the environmental impacts? In order to gain inference about these questions, questionnaires are distributed. Different statistical tests are performed so that it is possible to identify and analyse behavioural patterns.

In the methodology, quantitative data is very important to test the hypothesis and gain inference about the research question. Of course, analytical tools such as statistical software (SPSS, Excel) are implemented for analysing the data. Professional guidance is provided and double checks are performed by the supervisor to ensure maximum validity of the results and reduce statistical errors. The findings and conclusion are derived according to the careful analysis and data processing, implementing different tests such as χ^2 analysis Mann-Whitney U test, and 2-way ANOVA.

2. Literature Review

The section of literature review holds a pivotal place in the research work, as it facilitates the development of the theoretical understanding about the key context of the study. In reference to the research work focused on green conspicuous consumption, a detailed literature review is organized in the chapter. This section of the research involves critical review of the scientific journals, books, newspaper articles, etc., which are selected from online and offline sources. Some of the key theoretical aspects related to the topic of the research are identified below, which are prescribed as sub-headings for providing relevant facts and information.

Green consumerism is about purchasing products that are made in environmentally and socially friendly processes and do not harm the environment as much as regular products (Akenji, 2014). This concept has been discussed for many years, but has gained more relevance especially since the 80's. The "green" market has been developing globally since then and nowadays is a billion dollar industry. The development of green consumerism is due in great part to green marketing. Green marketing strategies were introduced in the 60's, but in the 80's and 90's they became more popular. The American Marketing Association defined green marketing in 1973 as "the study of positive and negative aspects of pollution and depletion of energy sources" (Kinnear, 1973).

Green consumerism has been very popular. Nowadays, people take pride when they drive "green energy" vehicles, drink fair trade coffee, use solar panels for energy consumption etc. Through eco-labeling techniques, environmental awareness campaigns, eco-efficient certifications, new regulations and recycling activities among others, companies promote the increasing popularity of green products (Akenji, Hotta, Bengtsson, & Hayashi, 2011).

The purpose of these campaigns is to motivate consumers to choose products that have a reduced impact on the environment and are socially friendly. However, there is a paradoxical effect when promoting green consumerism known as the rebound effect (Herring, 2009). Even though green products are made in a more efficient production process, the overall level of consumption has increased and the consequences outweigh the benefits. The reason behind this is companies are able to keep current market shares and reach new markets through the implementation of green processes that make them appealing to the "ethical consumerism" market; therefore increasing production, aggregate consumption levels, waste and profits.

While there is evidence of initiatives to reduce environmental and social impact, a significant number of fisheries and the fertility of farmlands are reducing, resources are becoming scarcer, the social gap is increasing and people are suffering the effects of their unsustainable life-styles. CO2 emissions have increased globally by 80% in the last 4 decades, resource extraction has increased more than the global GDP and there is a strong positive correlation between economic growth and impact on the environment (Jackson, 2009). According to Daly and Farley (2010), human beings have reached the

limits of the world capacity and are now living in a full world where resources cannot meet their necessities and the amount of waste generated from production is more than what the ecosystem is able to support (Daly & Farley, 2010).

The increasing environmental concerns have impacted the way in which consumers behave. Green purchase intention (GPI) indicates that people with higher environmental concerns tend to behave in more environmentally friendly ways (Sheltzer, 1991). Nevertheless, in more recent years, some people argue that although many consumers are concerned about the environment and society, their purchasing decisions are not based on the ecological impact that their choices may cause. On the other hand, these purchasing decisions are based on extrinsic motivations rather than intrinsic motivation. As a result, many authors have assessed green consumerism differently and many contradictory arguments can be found (Gary, Carolina, & Helena, 2012).

In recent studies, there have been indications that social status differentiation through green consumption may be possible. People may be purchasing green products not because they have a legitimate intention of reducing their environmental impact, but because they want to be praised and make a difference in terms of social recognition (Akehurst, Afonso, & Gonçalves, 2012). This type of behaviour may lead some to consume green products conspicuously in order to reflect a higher social status. Green Marketing strategies are now more sophisticated and guide consumers' decisions in terms of purchasing behaviour. New needs are being created and green products are being marketed extensively. However, green consumerism may lead to more consumption and increase the overall environmental impact because green marketing could create an illusion of sustainable development and a positive contribution to the ecosystem (Manzar & Zhong, 2010). Green consumerism is based on capitalism; therefore the final objective of its development is to generate profit (Gunderson, 2014). As Daly mentions in his Steady State Economy framework, a reform is needed in order to address consumption levels, stabilise population, produce more durable goods and reduce this unsustainable lifestyle (Daly H. , 1991).

2.1. Green Consumerism

Green consumerism is not an exclusive market dominated by hippies anymore. It is a fast growing industry that is developing and getting more attention from the government, companies and society (O'Rourke, 2012). Wehr (2011) explained that the concept of green consumerism developed from the evolution of conscious consumer segments having high-income levels and ascended to the media sources. Along with this, thorough campaigning of the concept by the NGOs and environmental organizations also increased awareness among the consumers (Wehr, 2011).

Green consumerism incorporates environmental concerns in all types of activities. According to Lewis Akenji (2014), "Green consumerism refers to the production, promotion and preferential consumption of goods and services on the basis of pro-environment claims" (Akenji, 2014). However, the definition of green consumerism is widely diverse and has had different meanings through the course of time.

(O'Rourke, 2012).

Green consumerism is an important aspect of marketing approaches, which is helpful in analyzing the perspective of consumers towards environmentally friendly products and services. Mansvelt (2011) defines green consumerism to be aimed at achievement of a balance among the expectations and preferences of consumers, and businesses' motive to generate profit under the concerns for the environment. It can also be referred to as the consumer behavior involving socially responsible and environmental concern based perspective. Therefore, it is recognized as the environmentally concerned consumption perspective of consumers (Mansvelt, 2011).

Muldoon (2006) justifies green consumerism as the purchase decision of consumers on the basis of environmental and social concerns (Muldoon, 2006). In order to justify the complexity of green consumerism, Moisander (2007) emphasized the responsibility of businesses to meet the requirements of an individual consumer. The central idea of the researcher is that communities of consumers can improvise the prospects of green consumerism in the business world. Along with this, social movements oriented towards the transformation of the perspective of consumers for eco-friendly products can make a significant contribution to ensure protection of the environment. Further, the author points out that the concept of green consumerism requires complex value based opinions. Green consumers carry out their purchase decisions in accordance with the interpretation of the fair share of products (perceived to be environmentally friendly) (Moisander J. , 2007).

According to Akenji (2014), differences exist between green consumerism and sustainable consumerism. Green consumerism emphasizes activities related to green purchasing behavior, reuse and recycling of products, and efficient production. However, sustainable consumerism can be referred to as a holistic approach for accomplishing sustainable development on the basis of sharing responsibility by the government, producers, and consumers for less consumption, so as to cut down the pressure on the harnessing of natural resources. It imposes a challenge to the societies in which the level of consumption makes a contribution towards economic growth. The author also elaborates the fact that green consumerism is facilitated by the governments for avoiding the emergence of environmental issues (Akenji, 2014).

The concept of green consumerism is prevailing in the business world for increasing awareness about the consumption pattern and behavior of consumers towards the delivered products and services. All kinds of products have an influence on the environment, which has to be reduced. Businesses focus on the application of green consumerism within their practices for giving quick responses to the demands and requirements of the consumers that are eco-friendly. In this regard, business organizations are adopting green process on the basis of assessment and evaluation of green performance, stimulating improvement in the corporate image, and development of a corporate environmental profile (Devi Juwaheer, Pudaruth, & Noyaux, 2012).

According to Verhoef and Langerak (2001), green consumerism may be, to some extent, disadvantageous for corporations in several aspects. For instance, it provides a conversion expense for the companies as it requires installation of new equipment and systems for more energy efficient business processes. Along with this, the process of green consumerism even leads to the production of costlier products for consumers that all classes of customers are not able to afford. The companies that want to go with the concept of green consumerism do have to face entrenched bias as the companies have to take support of some kind of legal certifications. This process also proves to be very expensive and complex and time consuming for them (Verhoef & Langerak, 2001).

In 2010, the sources of renewable energy were 12.4% of total energy. Sweden was among the leading member states of the European Union (EU) in terms of using renewable sources (47.9%). Austria (30.1%), Latvia (32.6%), and Finland (32.2%) accounted for a more than 30% share of consuming renewable energy resources. Luxembourg (2.8%), United Kingdom (3.2%), Malta (0.4%), and the Netherlands (3.85) were among the lowest users of renewable energy sources. The member states of the EU have to work hard towards reaching the individual targets for consuming renewable energy (Sedghi, 2012).

Further, KNC reports the Greendex as propounded by the National Geographic and GlobeScan survey. It reveals that the western countries emphasize the prospects of going green for the protection of the environment, while emerging economies lay emphasis on growth. The Greendex also shows differences in opinion and behavior of the people in developed, developing and under-developed countries. The below mentioned figure represents the Greendex score and relative guilt level felt by the consumers towards the environment. This indicates that Indian and Chinese people feel guiltier about the impact on the environment as compared to the consumers from the American and EU regions (KNC, 2012).

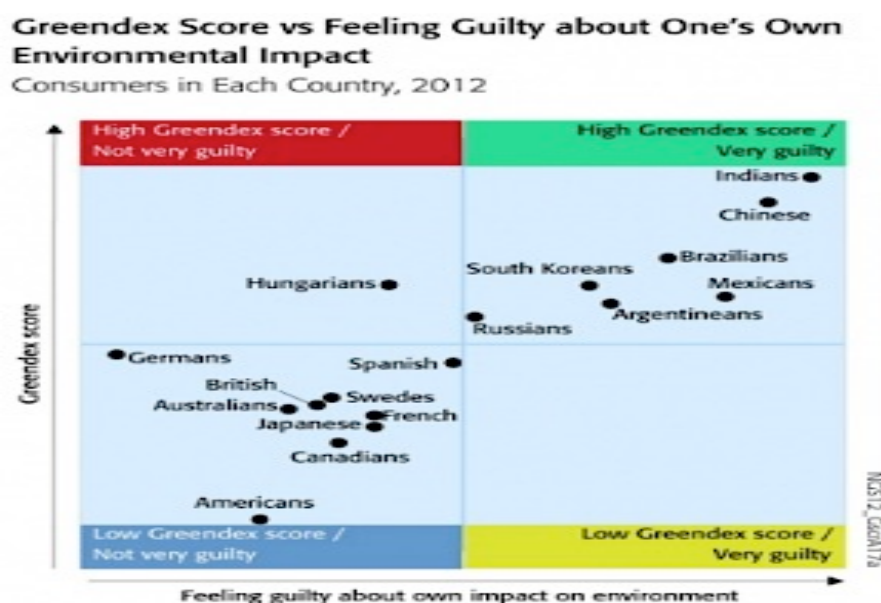


Figure 1: Greendex Score (KNC, 2012)

In this context, the report of Greendex specifies that the environmental concern has become the key priority of the consumers and business organizations across the world. Irrespective of this, climate change presents a substantial threat to them due to the low speed and scale of sustainable consumption. There are significant improvements in consumer habits to protect the environment, as people are getting involved in the consumption of local and organic foods. The results also indicate that consumers informed about their sustainable behavior towards the environment get motivated to improvise their consumption patterns. Through this, it can be identified that positive reinforcement can prove to be an effective tool for stimulating changes in consumer behavior (Greendex, 2014).

The phenomena of Green consumerism can be explored with the help of the concept namely, 'The Jevons Paradox'. Exploring this perspective, Polimeni (2012) has reflected that in the case when the efficiency of the organization enhances, the level of energy consumption shown by a system also becomes quite high. This paradox reflected that if there is a slow enhancement in efficiency within the organization, the consumption of energy will also remain low. In this way, the paradox reflects that higher efficiency can be proved negative from the perspective of energy consumption (Polimeni, 2012).

Further, Akenji (2014) explained the importance of sustainable consumption in terms of the proliferation of green consumption that supports potential implications of eco-labels and awareness campaigns on the purchase behavior of consumers. The author also argues that green consumerism is against the process of a structural shift in the consumption pattern. The plan for organizations towards sustainable consumer protection presents contradictory effects on the consumption of consumer products, which is evident from the rebound effect of consuming household appliances in the EU. With respect to the green end consumers, positive aspects of consumption can be derived from their beliefs in green marketing and not from their understanding of the environmental harm from the accumulated consumption (Akenji, 2014).

2.2. Green Conspicuous Consumption

Patsiaouras and Fitchett (2012) define conspicuous consumption as the expenditure of high prices for purchasing a product or service to display wealth. It indicates the social class of consumers from their competitive and exuberant consumption practices, as well as leisure activities. It signifies the role of social relations in maintaining status based consumption and conspicuousness displayed in the actions and behavior of an individual. Status motivated consumption seems to be ineffective among the western developed societies. The degree of consumption makes contributions towards improving the social relations and structuring of social organization in the community (Patsiaouras & Fitchett, 2012).

The authors further added that Thorstein Veblen proposed the theory of the leisure class on the basis of observation to justify the consumption behavior of individuals and their exogenous preferences within the social hierarchy. Patsiaouras and Fitchett justify that Veblen was among the first theorists

who emphasized consumption to be a socialization process and goods to be conspicuous objects of social class. In this context, the authors argue that wealthy people remain involved in purchasing highly conspicuous goods and services for presenting their wealth and higher social status. This indicates that conspicuous consumption is the uptake of products and services on the basis of conspicuous utility, which comes about for fulfilling both material needs and social needs (Patsiaouras & Fitchett, 2012).

Muldoon (2006) elaborates the importance of green consumerism by emphasizing the governmental intervention to specify strict environmental norms and standards. Critics of green consumerism reveal that environmentally conscientious consumption has a lesser influence on the perspective of consumers to make purchases. Along with this, it does not deal with the issues related to capitalism and development of needs. Irrespective of this, proponents of green consumption state that consumers can meet their expectations on the basis of the level of environmental awareness to protect it from their purchase decisions. Further, individualization of responsibility could benefit the environment from pollution and limit the extraction of valuable resources (Muldoon, 2006).

Conspicuous consumption refers to the intentional display of expensive products to the public for revealing their social status to the public. In this context, the social identity theory specifies the pro-social behavior of the individuals to make purchase decisions about the goods that are actively purchased within their community. Individuals remain involved in depicting consumer behavior to follow identity as conspicuously compiled by the socially desirable group. Memushi (2014) reveals that the level of conspicuous consumption in post-communist countries (that are developing) is high due to the inequalities in income, strong social relations, and cultural behavior to show them as *nouveaux riches*. This kind of consumption pattern came out after the end of communism and formation of democratic societies (Memushi, 2014).

The study conducted by Memushi is based on data collected from a living standard measurement survey in Albania during 2008. The results indicate that the patterns of conspicuous consumption are contingent on the personal characteristics of the consumers along with their socio-economic context. The proportion of conspicuous consumption in Albanian households is very small, due to greater involvement of people in meeting their requirements for normal products. Key factors that affect the ostentatious consumption within Albanian families include gender and education level. The existence of an urban environment around the surroundings of people contributes towards enhancements in the consumption habits for conspicuous goods and services (Memushi, 2014).

Szmigin & Carrigan (2006) explored the dimensions corresponding to the ethical consumption, namely distinction process, sign of love, aesthetic response, and hedonistic pleasure. The importance of ethical and moral judgments is supported through its influence on the daily living concerns and practices. These aspects are helpful for the marketers in developing advertisements accordingly and to instigate the consumption context and behavior of the individuals (Szmigin & Carrigan, 2006). Further, Griskevicius, Tybur & Bergh (2010) stated that conspicuous goods and services function towards

development and sustenance of pro-social reputation. It signifies the association between status and preferences towards becoming indulged into status motives. The availability of green products is widely dispersed in the market, but barriers exist to changes in consumption patterns. It requires sacrifices for switching to green behaviors, which also promotes conservation behavior among the people. Pro-social reputation plays an important role in motivating people to cooperate with the individuals from the pro-social community. In regards to status seeking purchases, conspicuous display becomes dominant as compared to self-sacrifice (Griskevicius, Tybur, & Bergh, 2010).

Connolly & Prothero (2008) justify green consumption as being among the key elements of environmental reform as undertaken within western societies and supranational bodies (like the EU). It emphasizes assigning responsibility to the consumers for dealing with the environmental problems by adopting compatible lifestyles and purchase decisions. EU countries have a political party (Green Party) attributed towards environmental groups that represents the impact of economic turnaround on the environment. In the words of the researchers, green consumption can be referred to as the process that intends for individuals to feel responsible and authorized to deal with the risks related to their purchase behavior and the environment. It is an important aspect of environmental reform strategies, which is helpful in the transformation of green subjectivity among individuals (Connolly & Prothero, 2008).

According to Mansvelt (2011), in the present era, consumers prefer to purchase environmentally-friendly products. People are purchasing green products for quite some time now. Conspicuous consumption refers to spending money on costly items in order to display the possessed wealth. As green products are considered to be expensive, they are purchased by the wealthy people, so that they can display their accumulation of wealth to the public. The author argues that green products are purchased by consumers, not due to intrinsic motivation to buy the product, but due to extrinsic motivation. Conspicuous consumption is considered to be unethical consumerism and an offense to the moral principles of the society. It has been criticized by many experts. It is deemed that the tax levied on the luxury goods decreases the revenue of high-status goods as the tax levied on them makes them more expensive in comparison to non-positional goods (Mansvelt, 2011).

(Dincer, Midilli, Hepbasli, & Karakoc (2009) states that green products are beyond the reach of the middle class and lower class groups. These products are purchased by high-class consumers. It has been reflected by the author that green consumerism resembles the aspect of conspicuous consumption. Green products, like solar panels and hybrid vehicles, are costly and can only be purchased by rich people. It has been observed that as the trend of the consumption of green products has increased, the high-class people have become more and more eco-conscious as these products add value to their standing in the society (Dincer, Midilli, Hepbasli, & Karakoc, 2009).

The purpose for which eco-friendly products and services were developed was to ensure future sustainability, but the green products and services are not being purchased by people due to their

benefits; they are purchased so that they can display their concern for the society. It has been found that, in the present era, luxury and performance have been outweighed by the benefits from the perceived social status, which comes from buying eco-friendly products and services (Dincer, Midilli, Hepbasli, & Karakoc, 2009). Some consumers prefer hybrid cars over the luxurious and stylish non-hybrid cars, which reflect their concern for the environment and its impact on the society.

As per the views of Vaughan (2010), an example, in this context, could be an individual buying a Toyota Prius. Individuals can reflect pro-social behavior by buying a Toyota Prius, which is a hybrid car and will not harm the environment as much, rather than buying a conventional and luxurious car. This will also help the individual in gaining recognition and appreciation among people as that person chose to be pro-social rather than pro-self. Although purchasing the hybrid car might not provide the individual with the luxury of having a car with more advanced features like comfort and performance as compared to conventional cars, but still he chose the social benefit instead of his own comfort and luxury. This pro-social behavior will provide the individual with various benefits like building a pro-social reputation and the development of social relations, which leads to the enhancement of his respect and trust in the society (Vaughan, 2010).

Griskevicius, Tybur, & Bergh (2010) states that the purchasing of green products and services also improves the status of an individual within a group. The status cannot be achieved through dominance or coercion, but by prestige, which states that the status is being provided to the individual through the free will of people in the society. There are other benefits, which an individual can obtain by being pro-social; research studies have shown that those individuals who sacrifice their own interests for the society and a group of strangers, have the probability to gain an authoritative and important position like that of a leader. Displaying a pro-social behavior is considered a viable strategy for gaining status in the society (Griskevicius, Tybur, & Bergh, 2010).

Gaining a good reputation in the society is an important motivation for exhibiting pro-social behavior. It can be said that green products have become a medium to make the society believe that those individuals who purchase green products are concerned for the society, and they keep the societal concern above their own interests and profits (Griskevicius, Tybur, & Bergh, 2010). The individuals, in the present era, are more concerned with status striving and they are not even aware of the negative consequences that it could bring to the society. In today's society, those individuals who do not buy green products and services and rely on the conventional products and services, are considered to be selfish, self-centered and not having any interest in providing benefits to the society by using green products. On the contrary, those individuals who buy green products are considered to be more socially aware and concerned with providing benefits to the society (Griskevicius, Tybur, & Bergh, 2010).

According to Vaughan (2010), in an experiment, a sliding scale was provided to 93 students and they were asked to pick their choice of green and non-green products, having the same price, on a sliding scale. They were given two choices; first, the choice of buying either green or non-green products from

the public stores and second, the choice of buying green and non-green products online. After reading a status story of some similar experiment, it was found that students preferred buying green products from the public stores rather than in private through online shopping. Various experiments have proved that those individuals, who have a concern for their social status, would prefer more green products and services without giving consideration to its high cost as compared to a conventional and low price alternative. Individuals today are more concerned with ensuring a good social status in the society instead of contributing to societal betterment (Vaughan, 2010). The consumption of green products acts as a medium that overshadows individuals' self-interest with the societal concern, and may be seen as worthy of the respect and trust without even identifying true intentions.

2.3. Effects of Conspicuous Consumption of Green Products

Brown (2013) is of the view that the conspicuous consumption of green products is considered to have both negative and positive effects. It has been observed that buying green products comes with other psychological baggage, which includes the tendency to compensate for the ethical consumption with unethical behavior. An example could be of those hybrid car owners, who drive in such a way that increases the possibility of accidents. Buying green products can only be effective if they have a corresponding colored total value system (Brown, 2013).

The author explained that most of the experts believed that the conspicuous consumption of green products also has some positive effects. It can be said that the conspicuous consumption of green products reflects selfishness and fulfillment of individual's own interests, but it is also seen as an effective strategy for promoting pro-environmental or pro-social behavior (Brown, 2013). It has been noticed that while economic and environmental concerns for the environment encourages individuals to adopt green behavior, the social aspects of conservation remain ignored.

As per Memushi (2014), it is known that the status is concerned with the social aspect; the social aspect also helps in fostering the green behavior. People, in the present times, prefer the consumption of green products in order to signal their social status. In most of the cases, people do not think of climatic changes, but they consider other people's perception of them in the society. The power of the social status is used to promote the pro-environmental behavior, including an active participation in environmental activism. The conspicuous consumption of green products and services is often considered to have a positive effect by promoting the pro-environmental behavior in individuals. It has also been found that an individual's motive of improving social status in the society does not totally influence the use of green products; it might be possible that one may use some of the non-green products and services as well. An important aspect here is that the definition and concepts of pro-social behavior are different in different cultures and subcultures (Memushi, 2014).

Nagle (2008) states that in the western society today, pro-environmental behavior is considered to be pro-social behavior, but in the Chinese rural village environment, it may not be an issue as people cannot afford to buy green products there. For instance, if a Chinese entrepreneur builds a factory

near a village, it will be considered as pro-social behavior as it will create employment opportunities for many residents. However, on the other hand, building a factory near a village is not considered as pro-environmental behavior as it may pollute the environment (Nagle, 2008).

According to Akenji (2014), the positive effects of the conspicuous consumption of green products have influenced many people to buy green products and services, but along with the positive effects, it also has some negative effects. The purchasing of green products, just in order to display in the society that the individual is concerned with the societal benefits, often leads to the misuse of green products (Akenji, 2014).

The author reflects that green products purchased by consumers are not always properly used. In some cases, green products are purchased just to flaunt and they are not properly implemented or disposed of by individuals. Akenji argues that green products have been developed to ensure that the sustainability of the environment is maintained, but in most cases, green products are not used appropriately and individuals continue to harm the environment by the use of conventional and non-green products. For instance, hybrid cars, which are considered to be eco-friendly, are partly deceptive in the context of greenness. The hybrid cars only address the issue of fuel conservation, but do not solve the larger behavioral problem of the society, which includes the reliance on public transport vehicles and the high consumption mentality (Akenji, 2014).

The perks provided by some governments to hybrid cars' owners, in cities and states, include free parking and access to carpool lanes without onboard passengers so that more and more people can purchase hybrid cars. This results in the strengthening and promotion of the benefits of hybrid cars, but does not change the thinking of individuals about the effect of the overall consumption of green and non-green products on the environment (Akenji, 2014). Green conspicuous consumption by individuals leads to influencing others to buy more green products, but does not change their perception of regular products. Additionally, pro-environmental products can be very expensive, and every individual cannot always afford to buy them even if they are desirable.

Durif, Boivin & Julien (2010) states that in the present era, the recession has affected the sales of green products. Since 2008, the impact of the recession on various countries has affected the preference of people for such goods. After the recession of 2008, the marketers of green products are not able to influence customers to buy their products although the farmers' products and car sales are recording satisfactory figures (Durif, Boivin, & Julien, 2010). It has also been found that today, every consumer is concerned with the environment and wants to buy green products, but if the price of green products does not suit them, they opt for conventional and non-green products and services.

2.4. New Ways to Promote Consumption of Green Products

According to Klintman (2012), conspicuous consumption is influencing people to a large extent to buy green products, but the fact that sometimes green products are purchased to flaunt the status in the

society leads to the misuse of the products and the benefits of such products' consumption remain ignored. There are a few measures and with their adoption, consumers can be encouraged to buy green products; for instance, the conspicuous consumption of green products can be used as an effective measure to promote their use. However, strategies to promote lower consumerism levels must be in place as well (Klintman, 2012).

The marketers need to convince consumers, especially those who prefer the conspicuous consumption of green products, that saving of energy is a smart step which is beneficial and broader than gaining the personal virtue of fashion (Klintman, 2012). Initially, green products were not accepted by people due to the claim that the conventional products are more effective than the green products. The green products need to be appealing for the mass consumers instead of just focusing on a niche market. An important aspect that prevents consumers from buying green products is their high cost.

Another important thing is that green products should fulfill the individual needs as effectively as the non-green products. Marketers should ensure that the consumers are convinced of the worth of green products and hence, their cost. It is the basic habit of an individual to buy products on the basis of how well they meet their needs, such as convenience, functionality and status, instead of focusing on how well they save the planet and benefit the environment (Klintman, 2012). Marketers should add green features to the existing consumption of non-green, conventional products and services so that the impact on the environment and society is reduced.

The author also stated that consumers are more likely to buy those green products which provide them with a good personal experience, like cost effectiveness or safety, rather than non-personal experience, like being ozone friendly or recyclable. Consumers should be provided with green products' benefits, which are focused and related to them instead of focusing on earth saving. It needs to be ensured that those individuals who buy green products just to gain a status in the society should not misuse the products. Individuals should be discouraged from using green products to highlight their high purchasing capacity (Klintman, 2012). Marketers should focus on offering personal health benefits, safety, economic and convenience benefits.

Swallow (2009) is of the view that in the present era, conspicuous consumption has become an important aspect of green consumerism. In most of the developed countries, like the US and the UK, green products are being purchased in order to show off the amount of wealth possessed by the individual in the society. People do not buy products for their required purpose; they buy products because it provides them recognition in the society (Swallow, 2009).

Business organizations need to position or combine green products' efficiency with the advantages that are gained by customers when using those products. A recommendation can be provided that instead of just promoting the environmental benefits of using hybrid cars, marketers need to ensure that they also promote the individual benefit (Swallow, 2009). There is still a need to adopt various measures that promote the consumption of green products among consumers. Those individuals who

opt for conspicuous consumption should be informed of the effects of their actions on other individuals and the society as a whole (Swallow, 2009).

Smart (2010) states that conspicuous consumption has become an important aspect of green consumerism and is used by individuals to gain benefits from the society, but this does not account for the actual use of green products. If the society actually needs to gain benefits, there is a need for smart measures, which can generate awareness regarding individual consumption and its impact on the future. According to Smart, individuals should not only ensure that they do not buy the products to gain a status in the society, but also to encourage other people to buy green products so that a sustainable and better future can be attained (Smart, 2010).

The author finally reflected that conspicuous consumption is an important aspect related to green consumerism and helps in the promotion of green products, but it has certain negative effects (Smart, 2010). For this, effective measures need to be adopted, like reducing the prices of green products so that the conspicuous consumption related to green consumerism is reduced. The reduction in the prices of green products will lead more consumers being able to afford them and gain benefits. The use of green products by individuals will also provide the society with the benefit of a sustainable future.

2.5. Green Marketing Strategies

Green marketing is among one of the novel concepts that facilitates strategic alignment of green and eco-friendly products in accordance with the environmental standards. In the current business scenario, business organizations are focusing on eco-innovations that aim at the development of a sustainable green marketing strategy. It is helpful for the organizations in establishing the base of corporate ethics and socially responsible practices within the scope of the green marketing strategy. Polonsky & Rosenberger (2001) emphasize the development of sustainable marketing plans to ensure compliance with eco-friendly behavior (Polonsky & Rosenberger, 2001). Kinoti (2011) specifies that green marketing strategies can provide substantial benefits to the individuals and organizations along with protection of environment in terms of accomplishment of sustainable development (Kinoti, 2011).

Many environmental groups and inter-governmental organizations are involved in the sharing of a socio-environmental relationship for addressing the environmental concerns on specific issues and implementing integrated strategies to overcome challenges. According to Kinoti, green marketing can be defined as the process of assessing positive and negative implications of marketing activities on the depletion of energy and resources, and pollution in the environment. Basically, the framework of green marketing claims the following aspects, such as recyclable, ozone friendly, renewable, environmentally friendly, phosphate free, less toxic, and more durable products. It is a broader concept that is widely applicable to both consumer and industrial goods and services, which support

minimum and detrimental influence on the environment. It facilitates the stimulation of sustainable development that calls for the enhancement and protection of the environment (Kinoti, 2011).

In general, green marketing strategies exemplify eco-marketing orientation within the business philosophy for teaming up towards effective alignment of the life cycle of production and distribution systems. Green marketing mix strategies focus on green products, green logistics, green pricing, and green promotion activities. These activities aim for a reduction of environmental losses, use of packaging materials, safe disposal, re-consumption and recyclable, repairable designing, and promote a green lifestyle, which is helpful for organizations in developing a better corporate image on the basis of social and environmental responsibility (Kinoti, 2011).

However, greenwashing is another green marketing strategy, which is widely adopted by the business organizations. It is a kind of environmentally oriented public relations. This strategy is adopted by the organizations by spending money and time to be green on the basis of advertising and marketing oriented business practices, so as to minimize the impact of operations on the environment. Benn & Bolton (2011) explain that the assessment of greenwashing is a complex approach because big multinationals (whose business activities affect the environment negatively) are involved in the promotion of environmental capabilities and credentials. The reason behind this is that they have diverse business segments managed in different countries, which signify that they are contributing towards the growth and development of the society and the environment. However, they simultaneously have an adverse impact on the society and the environment. This misleads the consumers and employees under the framework of greenwashing about the environmental practices of the business organization (Benn & Bolton, 2011).

Green Strategies adopted by big multinationals aim to appeal to the ethical consumerism market, but they have a hugely negative impact on the environment and society. It is evident from the case of McDonald's in Europe. In 2009, the company initiated a change in the logo from a yellow and red combination to a yellow and green combination, so as to promote concern for the environment. Though, the claims of green branding were limited with respect to implementation of environment related actions. This indicates that the company focused on packaging of food products in an eco-friendly manner, but did not focus on reducing the environmental implications of the process of production (Benn & Bolton, 2011).

An important green marketing strategy is to adopt eco-marketing orientation within the business philosophy, which can be in the form of an environmental audit (for assessing current performance of the business and defining benchmarks), consistent reporting of environmental performance, and empowerment of employees (through educational programs about ecological issues and responsibility). Another important green marketing strategy is based on support from government interventions, which are comprised of regulation policies (to balance environmental and economic activities), reformation of production and consumption approaches (by specifying authorization and

incentives), and participation in procuring business operations. In addition to this, strategic partnerships and coalitions are also important for dealing with complex ecological issues which requires the active participation of employees, environmental groups, general public, government, suppliers, and retailers. With the assistance of green marketing strategies, organizations can seek benefits in terms of enhanced profitability and market share accompanied by the betterment of products that stimulates competitive advantage (Polonsky & Rosenberger, 2001).

Golubevaite (2008) specifies eco-labeling as an eminent marketing tool for promoting green consumerism. With the aim of increasing the density of green consumers, organizations are becoming involved in claiming their responsibility towards the environment. The importance of eco-labeling is justified in terms of its direct influence on customer choice towards making purchases of environmentally friendly products. Through the application of eco-labels, organizations can verify the key characteristics (related to the environment) of the products, which is helpful in approaching the green consumers. This signifies that marketing communication practices can be effectively targeted in the market for emphasizing the requirements of the green consumers (Golubevaite, 2008).

Cherian & Jacob (2012) explain the importance of green marketing for analyzing the diverse attributes of consumers. In this context, consumers from Western Europe and other developed countries are more conscious about paying for green products to protect their contribution towards environmental impact. Green development includes opportunities for enhancement of the marketing niche. It is expected that the overall market with respect to the prospects of green marketing will increase significantly, which can make a positive contribution towards increasing awareness for environmental issues. An effective green marketing strategy can form the base of brand management for the development and delivery of value to the customers. Pro-environmental marketing tactics can also be helpful for the companies in influencing the rational decision making of the consumers and motivating them to get involved in green consumption. By aligning the green marketing strategy within the target markets, businesses can surely seek benefits from their core positioning to acquire competitive advantage (Cherian & Jacob, 2012).

Yunus & Rahman (2014) elaborate the role of green marketing in regards to enhancing awareness about green consumerism in the market. The authors explain the key purpose of green business is to promote socially comprehensive development, reducing environmental issues, extenuating the implications of changing climatic conditions, effectively handle the pressure from growth in population and effectively manage issues related to scarcity of resources and their volatile pricing. By the 1990s, 92% of European multinationals focused on renewed product development processes for highlighting their green concern and 85% of them altered their production systems to a great extent. By 2000, business organizations adopted a rating system to build green certification programs, and the allocation of eco-labels. The programs were oriented towards reducing the emission of greenhouse gases (GHG) and the conservation of natural resources. There is consistent improvement in the green

tactics for promoting the use of green products in light of green marketing strategies (Yunus & Rahman, 2014).

2.6. Impact of Green Marketing Strategies on Consumers' Behavior

Green marketing strategies are of significant importance in the transformation of consumers' behavior towards green products and services. It serves as the key purpose of the organizations in relation to the sustainable development of business processes to produce environmentally friendly products and become socially responsible. Business tactics contingent on green marketing provide an integrated platform to promote and instigate green practices within the environmental norms. Hartmann, Ibanez & Sainz (2005) exemplify the prospects of green brand positioning to deliver brand value and establish brand identity. It is helpful for the businesses in delivering assured benefits to the environmentally conscious consumers (Hartmann, Ibanez, & Sainz, 2005).

Hartmann and his associates explained that brand positioning is a prominent tool for the implementation of green brands in the competitive marketplace. It is contingent upon interaction among the marketing tools for the alignment of marketing communications, so as to shape distinctive perceptions of consumers for green brands. With the assistance of positioning a green brand, environmentally sustainable features of the brand can be actively communicated and differentiated in the market. This indicates that green positioning is an important aspect that ensures the success of the green branding strategies. It encompasses two types of strategies, namely functional (defining functional brand attributes) and emotional (including conceptual benefits in terms of well-being, auto-expression, and affinity towards the natural environment). These are helpful in the sharing of brand identity based information with the consumers to support a green marketing approach. It transforms the orientation of customers towards green brands and increases their awareness about their contribution towards environmental responsibility (Hartmann, Ibanez, & Sainz, 2005).

Kaufmann, Panni & Orphanidou (2012) highlight the significance of business ethics, environmental and social responsibility in the transformation of societal marketing practices and strategies. The concept of green marketing is interrelated to the prospects of sustainability and biodiversity, which has a direct influence on the green purchasing behavior of the consumers. In general, the purchase behavior of consumers can be depicted from the benefits and costs of the offering that is of relevance to them. As compared to this, green marketing efforts are helpful in enhancing the environmentally conscious behavior of the consumers that ensures future oriented results of sustaining a clean and green environment, which are also beneficial for society. Nowadays, consumers have become highly sensitive towards their purchases, attitudes and preferences towards the environment. It is supported by the active efforts of marketing people to promote the usability of green among consumers (Kaufmann, Panni, & Orphanidou, 2012).

In this context, Kim & Choi (2005) applied the value, attitude, and behavior based relationship

framework to explore the key aspects of green consumer behavior. The researchers identified three main factors that affect the purchase behavior of consumers, namely PCE (perceived consumer effectiveness), EC (environmental concern), and collectivism. With an increase in the awareness level of people about the environment, the appealing effect of green marketing has improved significantly. EC has a direct impact on the green purchase behavior of the consumers because it is derived from their self-efficacy and understanding for the environment. The impact of collectivism is contingent on the PCE, as it affects the beliefs and perception of consumers towards buying green products and services. Self-efficacy beliefs of the consumers can be influenced by the application of a collectivism oriented marketing strategy to influence the green buying behavior (Kim & Choi, 2005).

Albayrak, Caber, Moutinho, & Herstein (2011) also identify the antecedents of green purchase behavior of consumers. On the basis of skepticism, the team of researchers emphasized the relevance of psychological variables (namely skepticism, EC, and PCE), for assessing consumer behavior regarding green products. It is identified that consumer behavior is influenced by the sustainability concern for the environment, which can be depicted from the effectiveness of the consumers in making green purchases. Therefore, PCE is among the most important factors that have positive impact on the consumers' approach to purchase green products and services. Apart from this, skepticism has a negative impact on the consumer behavior for green products and services. Further, the higher the degree of skepticism, PCE, EC and green consumer behavior gets reduced. The self-awareness level of consumers can stimulate them to be responsible towards the environment. This indicates that it is important for the organizations to adopt trust based marketing practices to ensure community based innovation and promote environmentally responsible behavior (Albayrak, Caber, Moutinho, & Herstein, 2011).

Further, Young, Hwang, McDonald, & Oates (2010) presented information about the purchasing behavior of the consumers. According to the study, a significant difference exists among the environmental awareness and purchase behavior of consumers in the UK. Consumers show positive attitudes towards organic foods, but do not actually purchase them, which is going through the past three years. Green values have a lesser impact on the purchase decisions of the consumers because of a lack of information, habits, culture, brand strength, attitudes, and financial conditions. These aspects can be properly considered within the green marketing strategies for propagating positive awareness among the consumers about the benefits of sustainable consumption. Along with this, knowledge based educational programs and promotional campaigns for green products and services prove to be beneficial in generating a positive value among the consumers to adopt green behavior while making purchases (Young, Hwang, McDonald, & Oates, 2010).

2.7. Motivational Factors that Influence Consumers' Purchase Decisions

Consumer's purchase decisions for green products and services are highly influenced by different factors that involve functional aspects of the products, the emotional well-being of the consumers,

psychological perspective, and market orientation (trend in the society). Laroche, Bergeron & Barbaro-Forleo (2011) specify that gender type affects the consumer behavior due to differences in perspective about ecological concerns. The researchers also highlighted factors that predict ecological concern among consumers, which are personal values, ethical ideas, societal factors, personal beliefs, and cultural orientation. Under the set of these factors, consumers remain willing to pay more for eco-friendly products as compared to conventional products. The prospects of collectivism are helpful in motivating consumers from the social hierarchies, as they show concern towards one another and emphasize their duty for the welfare of the society and the environment (Laroche, Bergeron, & Barbaro-Forleo, 2001).

Furthermore, Kianpour, Anvari, Jusoh, & Othman (2014) also identified that there are key motivators that drive people's green buying behavior. Promotional tools affect the understanding and improve their awareness about buying eco-friendly products to deal with environmental issues. Therefore, businesses use promotional tools for persuading customers to make purchases of green products. Along with this, PCE, EC, and the knowledge base of consumers are also important factors that influence consumers to possess green purchasing intention, so as to solve and make contributions toward environmental issues, such as global warming, scarcity of resources, etc. Legal rules and regulations are also important factors that drive consumers to buy eco-friendly products. Legal norms have a significant impact on the decisions of the consumers for abiding towards the use of green products. Reference groups act as a supportive factor that is helpful for the people in following their friends and colleagues towards going green. Green buying behavioral perspective is also actively shared by the people on their social networks that affects the behavior of the reference group, which is in compliance to the theory of planned behavior (which specifies subjective norms influence purchase decisions) (Kianpour, Anvari, Jusoh, & Othman, 2014).

Another set of factors that affect the green purchase behavior of consumers includes environmental knowledge, peer influence, environmental affect, self-efficacy, price, gender, shelf space, and environmental motivation. These factors are helpful in the promotion of consumer commitment towards the purchase and use of greener products (Lee, Choi, Kim, Ahn, & Ger, 2012). Shelf space also plays an important role in motivating consumers to transform their purchase decisions and opt for green products. It can lead to an improvement in the accessibility of green products in stores, which can easily be noticed by the consumers. Wahid, Rahbar & Shyan (2011) also support the importance of green in the form of the mainstream concern of the businesses. In addition to the above-mentioned factors, the study specifies self-identity and environmental attitude as key factors for motivating green orientation among the consumers. The researchers also justify the role of environmental knowledge in the enhancement of concern among the consumers. The intention of consumers gets transformed towards seeking product knowledge and its environmental impact (Wahid, Rahbar, & Shyan, 2011).

2.8. Social Implications of Green Consumerism

In the current business scenario, green consumerism is an important aspect of market analysis for the alignment of actions and perspectives of the consumers for environmentally friendly products. Moisander (2007) reveals that green consumerism necessitates careful consideration of consumer behavior and specialist knowledge because there are differences in the ecologically responsible behavior of the consumers. Practical skills are to be developed by the businesses for dissemination of task knowledge among the employees towards facilitating consumers with ecological information related to the offered products and services. This approach reduces difficulty for green consumers in making purchase decisions. This indicates that consumers' decisions are highly influenced by the societal factors that are related to individualistic and collectivistic orientation towards green products and services (Moisander J. , 2007).

In addition to this, Vaughan (2010) reveals that consumers focus on selection of green products for improving their social status. In order to represent an eminent social status, consumers remain willing to make purchases of green products by sacrificing performance of the products. It is evident from the purchase behavior of consumers towards hybrid cars and energy saving devices, which is helpful for them in improving their perceived social status in terms of reduction of environmental impact. For this, consumers remain willing to make a sacrifice of performance and luxury. People also select green products and services while making purchases in public for revealing their status message. Therefore, the approach of consumers with a desire for social status is an effective one for encouraging others towards selecting green options from the market. This implies that social status might also be among the key factors that drive green purchase behavior of consumers (Vaughan, 2010).

Sanches (2005) highlights the role of green consumption in compliance to the efforts of the government. In this regard, the government of France has implemented conventional policies with an integrative orientation to embrace sustainability and procurement in public actions for facilitating green consumption. It has potential implications on the society due to the existence of greening schemes and taxation policies (that impose environmental costs) (Sanches, 2005). Paco, et al. (2009) elaborated the increasing concern among consumers for the environment, which can be clearly analyzed from their purchase behavior. It has transformed the perspective of businesses towards managing marketing prospects to meet the environmental needs of consumers. Nowadays, consumers become involved in analyzing their responsibility towards the environment, which has paved the way for marketers to differentiate between consumers on the basis of demographics and environmental perspectives to define a greener segment and other consumer segments. It can become helpful in differentiating the consumer perceptions with respect to the target market and seeking advantages from the opportunities related to green consumerism (Paco, Raposo, & Filho, 2009).

Gan, Wee, Ozanne, & Kao (2008) highlighted the relevance of the environmental behavior of consumers in New Zealand for solving environmental problems. Environmental consciousness among

the people of the country is high, which has a substantial influence on their environmental behavior. They consider GHGs and depletion of the ozone layer to be key environmental issues. For dealing with such issues, consumers focus on transformation in the consumption and purchase behavior, which provide opportunity to the marketers for targeting customers accordingly. Brand name, price consistency and eco-labeling are keenly recognized by consumers for making purchasing decisions. Therefore, marketers are required to align a better marketing mix for green products, so as to transform the negative perception of consumers' towards the green products (Gan, Wee, Ozanne, & Kao, 2008).

Moreover, Boztepe (2012) also justifies the relevance of environmental awareness for directing consumer behavior towards green products. Businesses act as socio-economic entities in the market that transform the perspective of consumers towards the eco-friendly product propositions. Green marketing tactics motivate consumers to become more sensitive to the environmental issues and become well aware about their contribution to the environmental impact. The consumption report of the EU reveals that 10% of consumers in Europe focus on the green energy labels available in the supermarkets. It is evident from the case of airline transportation, which makes a significant contribution towards carbon emissions in the environment. British Airways provides a compatible solution to the people planning to travel who are environmentally concerned. The airlines provide financial support for reducing carbon emission in terms of 12.08 Euro per ton per person. Demographic characteristics of the consumers are important to be analyzed for ensuring effective alignment of green behavior (Boztepe, 2012). Therefore, it is essential to emphasize the socio-economic implications of green consumerism because it is the responsibility of consumers to look at the diverse aspects of the environmental impact from their day-to-day activities.

2.9. Summary

From the above discussion, it can be summed up that green conspicuous consumption is among the key processes of business environment, which has social, economic and environmental implications. With an increase in awareness about the environmental influences of conspicuous consumption, consumers are focusing on the purchase of environmentally friendly products. The prospects of green consumerism depict the characteristics of consumers for green products, their purchase behavior, and environmental attitudes. There are various motivational factors that contribute towards green purchase behavior among the people, which are EC, PCE, self-identity, self-efficacy, collectivism, gender type, environmental knowledge, environmental affect, and peer influence. These factors transform the perception and attitude of consumers towards green products and services and contribute towards the lessening of environmental impact. These aspects provide significant opportunities to the marketers for integrating green marketing philosophy within the business operations to promote the usability of green purchase behavior among the target consumers.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The research methodology is the process of collecting information and data for making important research decisions (Kuada, 2012). This part of the research includes publication research, interviews, surveys and other research techniques. Furthermore, this part of the research can include both current and historical information (Kuada, 2012). The research methodology simply uses different methods for collecting data in a research study. The questions relating to the concerned research are explored in this part of the research in a systematic way.

Furthermore, this part of the research focuses on the various research approaches which are used to determine the data collection methods. It also includes the philosophy and research design used in the study, which help in highlighting the base methods used for conducting the research. The data collection methods used in the research are also elaborated in this part of the paper. Detailed information regarding the sample size and sampling strategy technique are also discussed in this section (Goddard & Melville, 2004).

The following research is mainly related to Green Conspicuous Consumption, which affects the buying decisions of consumers. The research is conducted to evaluate the green marketing strategies on consumer decision-making. The following section of the research works on highlighting the various aspects of green consumerism and relating it to conspicuous consumption. The major focus of the research methodology is to find out the facts that identify the conspicuous consumptions of the consumer. Furthermore, the focus is to explicate the prime research tools, which are used for gathering the data to obtain final conclusions (Goddard & Melville, 2004).

Moreover, the theme of the following research revolves around finding various kinds of green marketing strategies and techniques, which stimulate consumer decision-making. Furthermore, this research identifies the feelings that consumers share for the green-marketed products, which induce them to buy (Goddard & Melville, 2004).

3.2. Methodology framework

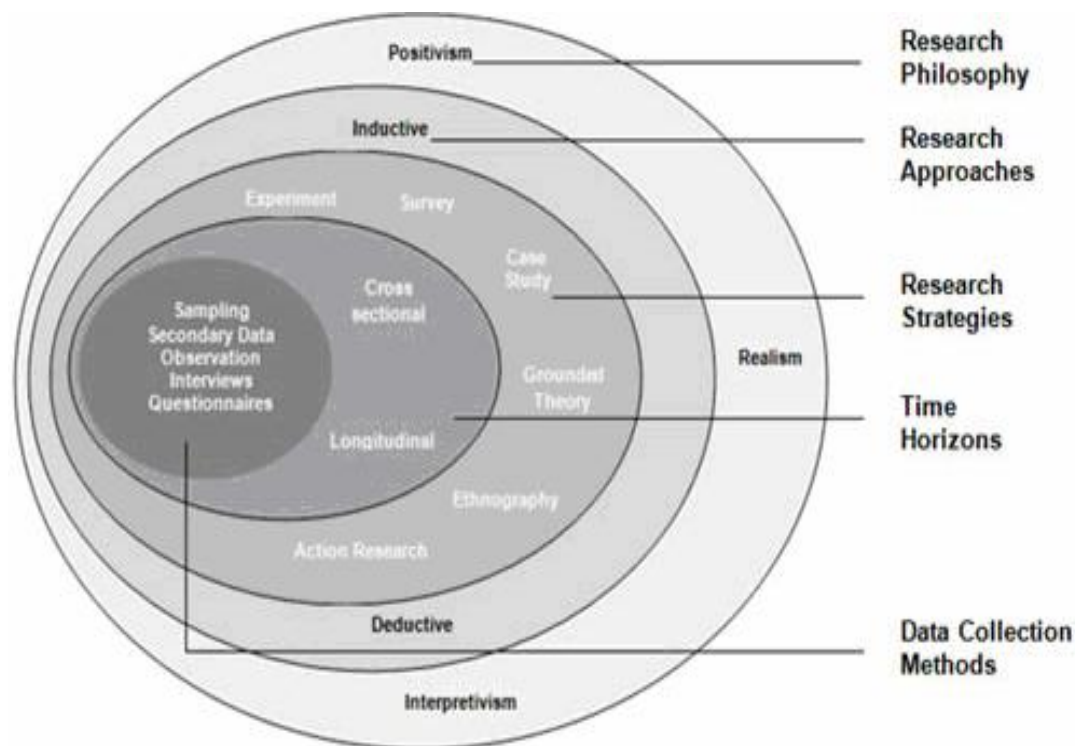


Figure 2: Research Onion Model (Oriesek, 2004)

This research study is based on Sauder's onion model, which has provided a basic framework for the selection of the most suited research methods for the data collection purposes in this research study. Sauder's Onion Model provides different stages for the selection of specific research strategies in a research work. In light of this model, the selection of the suitable research approach, research design, and research philosophy have been done according to the nature of this study and adequacy of the data collection methods. Along with this, this model has also provided a base for selection of the data collection method addressing the research problem (Oriesek, 2004).

3.3. Research Approach

Research approach plays a significant role in the process of the research as it helps in determining the path of flow of activities while conducting the research. Two types of research approaches are mainly discussed and categorized in the research process; namely inductive research approach and deductive research approach. Both the approaches have their own significance and relevance and the type of approach to be used in the research depends upon the nature and subject of the research (Panneerselvam, 2004).

An inductive research approach begins with the observations and after that, theories are formulated

at the end of the research in accordance with the observations made at the initial stage (Kuada, 2012). Therefore, in this approach, the study starts from the observations which can be used for the further development of explanations by using a series of hypotheses. None of the theories will be applicable at the initiation process of the research. It is also called the top down approach as it moves from general to specific. Furthermore, it includes literature theories, hypothesis, and data collection, confirming the hypothesis and broadcasting the findings.

A deductive research approach on the other hand, aims at testing the theories which begins with a particular hypothesis and are the most concerned with quantitative research, which does not have a set pattern of rules. Furthermore, the other name for this research is a bottom line approach, which is carried out from specific to general. The hypothesis developed is based on the existing theory (Kuada, 2012). The deductions are based on the expected patterns, which are verified and tested against the observations.

Concerning the following research out of the two research approaches discussed, a deductive research approach was used as in this study; quantitative data analysis is used for this project and is supported by the deductive research approach. This approach is highly beneficial for this research as it guides in deriving the answers for the research question developed above. The discussion of the research which is based on the topic of green conspicuous consumption can be better evaluated through a deductive research approach as it helps to gather quantitative data resulting in information with solid facts and figures (Kuada, 2012).

3.4. Research Philosophy

The research philosophy, which is also called a research paradigm, acts as a source of a worldview for the research study. Just like a philosophy provides a base to any study, in the same way a research philosophy provides an outline based on the beliefs and values to which the research is abided. Therefore, it provides a philosophical phenomenon according to which the research is carried out and the relevant data and information have been gathered. There are two main types of research philosophies namely positivism and interpretivism. The positivism research paradigm is concerned with the understanding of the functionality of human behavior on the other hand, interpretivism research philosophy is concerned with understanding the whole process in detail (Panneerselvam, 2004).

As the research question is based on the behavior of the consumer in relation to conspicuous consumption, a positivism research philosophy has been selected. This research philosophy will be useful in bringing into line the research work with the research question. The positivism philosophy suits the area covered in this research as the data collected helped in maintaining the objectivity of the research work by making it more reflective through the study conducted. Conspicuous consumption on the part of the consumer involves a human behavioral aspect, which will affect the green marketing concept and strategies related to it (Panneerselvam, 2004).

3.5. Research Design

Research designs are categorized into three types; namely exploratory, descriptive and diagnostic research designs. When the research problem is clearly defined then an exploratory research design is used. The purpose of this research design is to explore the research questions and to prove, right or wrong, the hypothesis developed in this study. It mainly concentrates on the nature of the problem and is called the initial research (Creswell, 2013).

Descriptive research on the other hand depicts and describes the characteristics of the population. It mainly addresses the “What” questions. The research carried out by descriptive studies can be either quantitative or qualitative in nature. In this type of research, data analysis is applied to both the qualitative and quantitative researches. Moreover such kinds of research are mainly dependent on observations (Creswell, 2013).

Diagnostic research studies determine the frequency with which the occurrence of something takes place with some other element of the universe. It mainly depicts those instances where studies are associated with the variables. Thus, a specific characteristic of a population is studied and diagnosed in this research design (Creswell, 2013).

In the following research, the exploratory research design has been used which proved to be quite useful in studying in detail the topic related to the investigation. The main purpose of using exploratory research is that it helps considering both primary and secondary data, which are used in this research study. Thus, it helps gathering reliable data regarding conspicuous consumption for the concerned question. In order to investigate about the conspicuous consumption of consumers and green marketing strategies, an integrated research design is required which helps in drawing a link between the research question and the collected data (Creswell, 2013). Conclusively, an exploratory research design is best suited for this purpose and therefore has been used in this research.

3.6. Data Collection Methods

In this research process, two types of data collection methods are used in order to gather the most relevant information, namely a primary data collection method and a secondary data collection method, which further help in fulfilling the research objectives (Lancaster, 2007). The primary data collection method provides first-hand information because the data is collected for the specific purpose of the study. There are many advantages involved when using the primary data; for example, maintenance of high-level quality of the data. Additionally, because first-hand information is collected, it can be gathered according to the requirements.

Secondary data on the other hand, refers to the data collected in the past, which is used for the current study and is referred to as second hand information. The main advantages of using

secondary data are that it saves time and money and can provide reliable sources (Lancaster, 2007). Secondary data has been collected from various books and scholarly journal articles.

In this research study, the primary data collection methods have been used through the distribution of surveys as conspicuous consumption can be better analyzed by extracting information from the consumers themselves. Moreover, the questionnaire method used as primary data collection method also helped save time and money as the surveys were distributed mainly online. The sample population was consumers in Austria. The questionnaires were distributed physically and virtually to the residents of Vienna, and to the rest of Austria through online channels. A total of 223 people have been surveyed and thus the sample size of the research study is 223. The questionnaire in the survey has helped to identify the pro environmental behavior and type of consumers from the respondents. It also helped to explore whether or not green conspicuous consumption is prevalent by identifying the general conspicuous patterns (Lancaster, 2007).

The survey questionnaires were designed in a way that made it possible to identify different characteristics such as age group, gender, level of education, and some other questions that help getting a more accurate outcome. Austria is the most appropriate population in this case because it has high level of “green consumption” and people are relatively more environmentally aware than in other countries. In the last years, the “green” market has become more common; restaurants, supermarkets, stores, and other establishments are increasingly implementing green branding strategies. Additionally, Vienna is highly ranked as a city with a high quality of life, so it is interesting to know the role of the environment and conspicuous consumption in this situation. Not to mention, Vienna is where the researcher is living and studying at the moment; therefore, it is easier to collect the data, access information, and have a direct involvement in the research.

The design of the questionnaires is in the form of Likert scales where people had to select from a range of 5 to 1 (1= Strongly agree, 5= Strongly disagree). These questionnaires helped to identify tendencies and attitudes towards green consumerism, feelings after green product purchasing processes, communication of sustainability, effects on social life and other psychological and behavioral aspects. The time for answering a questionnaire is approximately 5-7 minutes according to the pre-testing samples. Moreover, the design helped to promote participation because of the effective questions that yielded quality results.

This study does not intend to be representative for the whole population of Austria. Nevertheless, because the purpose of this research is to prove the existence of green conspicuous consumption in the Austrian society, the study does not need to be representative. Therefore the above-described methodology is appropriate for this investigation. The structure of the research and the objectives of the questions included in the survey to test the hypotheses can be observed in the chart below.

Table 1: Structure of the research

| Questions | Section | Hypothesis to test | Research Answer |
|--------------|---|---|-----------------|
| 1-6 | Section A | | |
| | All data relevant to demography such as city of residence, gender, age, professions and education level are obtained and analyzed | Demographics | |
| 7-12 | Section B | | |
| | Data helpful to measure environmental awareness, important aspects taken into account when buying new products, and feelings towards the environment when making a purchase are obtained and analyzed | 1. People prefer green products to regular products. | |
| 13-15 | Section C | | |
| | Data relevant to identify the influence of green marketing tools such as bio certificates or eco labeling on the purchasing decisions of participants are obtained and analyzed | 2. Marketing tools such as bio/eco certificates have a significant impact on consumers' decisions. | |
| 16-41 | Section D | | |
| | Data addressing queries regarding conspicuous consumption in general and green conspicuous consumption is obtained in order to analyze their relationship | 3. Green consumerism creates a feeling of responsibility towards the environment. 4. Green consumerism signals high social status. | |

3.7. Sampling Strategy

In order to fulfill the objectives of the research in an effective manner, the selection of an appropriate sample is essential. Various sampling strategies are used to collect a sample from a large population. The most common strategies for sampling are simple random sampling and non-random sampling (Gregorie & Valentine, 2007). In simple random sampling, the samples are selected from the population in such a way that every element of the population has equal chance of being selected as the sample. Thus, this form of sampling is free from personal bias. On the other hand, non-random sampling refers to the sampling method in which the researcher has the choice of selecting a particular element from the population as the sample. Thus, this method of sampling involves personal bias, which can at times mislead the purpose and the study of the research (Gregorie & Valentine, 2007).

In this research study, theoretical sampling and convenience sampling strategies are those that gave reliable conclusions (Thompson, 2012). Theoretical sampling refers to the data collection process for developing a theory by collecting codes and analyzing data. Convenience sampling on the other hand, helps to collect information from people who are easy to reach. For the purpose of collecting the appropriate information for the research in an effective manner, a survey questionnaire has been prepared. Through the theoretical sampling and convenience sampling methods, a sample of 223 people were selected from a pool of Austrian residents. The sample size selected is appropriate for the research as it has helped gathering enough data, which is practical to draw a relevant conclusion. Responses given by the respondents through questionnaires are very useful and were aligned with the research question. The information presented through questionnaires is quite valuable for exploring the behavior and opinion of the consumers regarding conspicuous consumption and evaluate their views about green marketing. These responses contributed in a significant manner to derive the most consistent results for the research study in respect to the conspicuous consumption of the customers (Thompson, 2012).

3.8. Data Analysis

Data analysis is an integral part of the research study as this process helps in identifying the best solutions. Analysis forms an important part of the research work because the data that has been collected during the research needs a detailed examination for drawing appropriate conclusions. This process helps in converting raw data into a refined and important study (Hadi, 2015).

It is seen that the data used in this research study is quantitative and thus, the various data analysis methods considered in this research study are:

- χ^2 analysis: used to test the significance of a sample on the basis of the null hypothesis.

- Mann-Whitney U-test: another form of statistical tool in which different variations are set on the basis of the different components. It explores the variation between group mean and associated procedures (Beri, 2005).
- 2-Way ANOVA: used to compare the mean differences existing between two variable groups. The objective of a 2-way ANOVA is to identify the relationship between the two independent variables on the dependent variable (Laerd Statistics, 2015).
- Wilcoxon Test: Is anon parametric test that helps analyzing the relationship between to situations where the variables are correlated. It is helpful to evaluate data that is not normally distributed, but have correlated samples (Social Science Statistics, 2015).

In the following research, the hypothesis taken is that people signal social status through green consumption. Therefore, in this research study, a X^2 test has been incorporated in order to compare the observed data with the expected data. X^2 , Mann-Whitney U-tests, and ANOVAs served as the best reliable tools for this research study. Furthermore, a special software called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in order to implement the above mentioned statistical tools for the quantitative data in the research study (Foster, 2001).

3.9. Ethical Consideration

In the research process, the most valuable consideration is to maintain the validity and reliability of the research work. For maintaining the validity and reliability of the research work, the most important prerequisite is to include ethical consideration while doing data collection and its analysis. There are several guidelines in the research field that can be used by the researchers to follow ethical considerations in their work (Miller, Mauthner, & Birch, 2012). In this context, in the following research study, at the first level, the aspects of information confidentiality are given a high degree of value. In order to maintain this ethical consideration, the personal information of the research participants is kept secured and saved in a password protected form, so that no third party can have access to this information for their personal use or misuse. In addition to this, the other ethical consideration that is given value in this research work is related to informed consent. The selection of the sample size from the targeted sample population has been done through getting their prior consent. None of the participants were pressured to take part in the research work, nor were they given any kind of incentive for having participated in the data collection process (Miller, Mauthner, & Birch, 2012).

Furthermore, the research will also consider the issue of originality of information. In this regard, in this research study, none of the information is copied and pasted from any sources, while all the information is presented in the author's own views. The use of different sources is done only for the purpose of reference (Paul, 2010). For securing the research work against this issue, proper references are given in the end of the research. In addition to this, in order to give credibility and reliability to the authors whose work is used for reference purpose, proper in-text citations are given

in the text. In this way, the research has avoided the issue of plagiarism.

Hence, all these ethical considerations have been given prime value, during data collection processes in the research work. The inclusion of these ethical considerations has widened the scope of this research, as well as has rendered a high degree of validity and reliability to it.

3.10. Research Limitations

The research works are long projects that are organized in sequential steps. Despite significant efforts of the researcher, none of the research works are completed with full degree of perfection because of the limitations existing in the process that restrict the scope to a certain degree (Pat, 2006). In this regard, this research methodology also has some serious limitations that are critical for maintaining its scope. The key limitations of this research work are mentioned under the following points with a specific description of each:

- At first instance, the research work has used only a quantitative technique for data collection purposes. The use of only quantitative data for addressing the research work might not be sufficient to maintain full validity of the results. That is a major limitation of this research project. In addition to the quantitative method used in this study, if a qualitative data collection method would have been also used, its evidence base could be improved to a certain degree (Pat, 2006).
- Additionally, in this research study, the data collection is done from a large sample size including the participants from different cultural backgrounds. For the purpose of answering the research question, to have a timely data collection from this size of sample is very much a crucial task. Along with this, to make aligned data interpretation from the diverse views of participants is also a very critical issue in this study.
- Furthermore, in this research work, statistical methods have been applied for data analysis purposes which is a very significant process. In order to reach an accurate result from these methods, there is a need for keen concentration and focus on analyzing the data; otherwise, it might have deviations from the results of the research to some extent (Pat, 2006).

All these limitations of this research work are very much critical for maintaining its scope in real world practices.

3.11. Summary

The methods, tools and techniques used above for studying the research in detail can be summarized as an effective action plan. The methods applied in this research study are used for deriving the authentic and reliable information in accordance with the research question. Through this chapter of the research, it has been highlighted that exploratory research design in combination with the positivism research philosophy has proved to be a quite useful methodology in successful completion

of the research work. Furthermore, a deductive research approach has been used in this research study because of the fact that it supports quantitative data analysis.

The data in this research study has been gathered through primary and secondary data collection methods in which survey questionnaires had been prepared. Consecutively, the sample data of 223 people have been collected to gather opinions from respondents regarding conspicuous consumption, which affect or may be affected by green marketing strategies. Furthermore, the ethical considerations regarding the research have been discussed to gain ethical reliability of the sources used and information gathered. Certain limitations were realized during the course of this research, which has been mentioned for the consideration of future researchers. Overall, it can be said that the whole methodology and its techniques played a significant role to provide a proper direction to the research towards its successful conclusion.

4. Data Analysis and Findings

The data collected through the primary collection method has been completely registered and codified. In this section, the data is fully analyzed and different statistical tools are used in order to derive accurate conclusions. The software used for this purpose is SPSS and, as mentioned in the previous section, Mann-Whitney U-test, X^2 analysis and ANOVA are performed on the data collected. Several hypotheses are tested in this section, and according to the data gathered and the statistical results, the researcher is able to prove the different assumptions right or wrong.

Before conducting the official questionnaire, pre-testing sections were undertaken in order to formulate effective questions and yield the most valid and accurate result. Supervision and guidance were provided from an expert and as effect, several questions were amended and reformulated. The survey had a total of 41 questions and took about 5 to 7 minutes to complete.

The analysis is divided in 4 sections:

- Section A consists of all data relevant to demography. In this section, data such as city of residence, gender, age, profession and education level are quantified and allocated in different diagrams or tables so that there is a better and clearer understanding of the statistics about the participants in this research.
- Section B consists of data helpful to measure environmental awareness among participants. The questions in section B are specifically designed to obtain information about what aspects participants take into account when buying new products, and whether or not they consciously buy green products or prioritize them over regular products. Also, this section aims at identifying the feeling participants have towards the environment when making a purchase. These are all factors that will help testing the first hypothesis of this research.
- Section C is aimed at analyzing the influence of green marketing tools such as bio certificates or eco labeling on the purchasing decision of participants. In this section, participants are assessed on their preferences for new products and their perception of green products in general. Additionally, this will help to identify the type of consumer the participants are, for example, impulsive or passive buyers. This type of question will contribute to the test of hypothesis 2 in the research.
- Section D of this analysis is aimed at testing hypotheses 3 and 4 of the research. This section addresses queries regarding conspicuous consumption in general and green conspicuous consumption. This data will greatly contribute to the research question of this paper. Besides providing an insight about conspicuous consumption patterns from the participants, it helps in identifying the links that may exist between green consumption and conspicuous consumption in the Austrian society.

In the following analysis, participants were asked to rank their opinions in a scale with from 1 to 5 (1=strongly agree, 5=strongly disagree). All the results in this chapter are based on the estimated marginal means calculated for each of the categories, unless specified otherwise. For this reason, behavioral patterns are described according to tendencies and not actual affirmations since extreme cases are averaged with the rest of the responses. Additionally, some of the questions in the survey refer to most recent experiences or specific scenarios because the aim is to make it easier for participants to relate to a particular circumstance and not give socially desired answers. Nevertheless, this strategy is suitable to help solving the research questions of the study.

Moreover, in this analysis, the green color refers to male responses and the blue color to female responses. In order to avoid any confusion between terms, Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products, pro environmental products and other variation different to “regular products” mean “green products”. Additionally, the complete calculations and results from the data analysis process can be observed in the appendices of this paper.

4.1. Section A- Demography

4.1.1. Geographic Location

Participants in the survey were from different areas in Austria. In total, 223 people participated in this research; it includes responses from Vienna, Innsbruck, Linz, Salzburg, Graz, Lustenau, Feldkirch, Dornbirn, Villach, and Klagenfurt. Most of the participants were from Vienna as this is the city where the study was mainly conducted. The rest of respondents were included in order to expand the scope of the research; however, they are by no means representative for their location. Therefore, 69% of the total responses are from Vienna, 6% from Linz, 4% from Salzburg, from Dornbin, from Lustenau and from Graz, and 3% from Villach and from Klagenfurt (See Table 2).

Table 2: What city do you currently live in?

| What city do you currently live in? | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Vienna | 69% | 153 |
| Innsbruck | 3% | 7 |
| Linz | 6% | 13 |
| Feldkirch | 2% | 5 |
| Dornbin | 4% | 8 |
| Lustenau | 4% | 8 |
| Graz | 4% | 8 |
| Villach | 3% | 6 |
| Klagenfurt | 3% | 6 |
| Salzburg | 4% | 9 |

4.1.2. Age

The Age representation chart shows that the majority of responses come from people aged 21 to 30 years with a total of 63% representation in the study. The second largest group aged between 31 to 40 years with 14% of the total responses. Very close, with a 13% representation, are respondents aged between 16 to 20 years. The lowest percentages come from respondents aged between 41 and 50 years with 5% representation, 51 to 60 years with 4% and 61 or older with 1% representation from the total data collected.

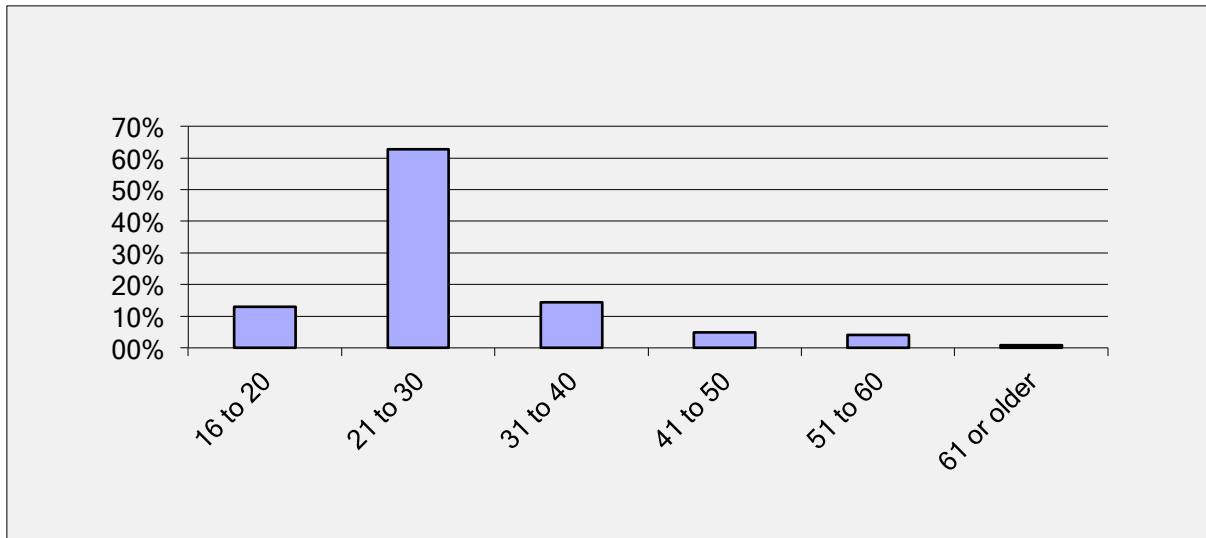


Figure 3: What is your age?

4.1.3. Gender

The representations of female and male populations are similar. From this sample, 51.4% are female and 48.6% are male; however, 0.3% did not answer the question. As seen in figure 4, there is a slight majority of female respondents in the sample, but not very significant.

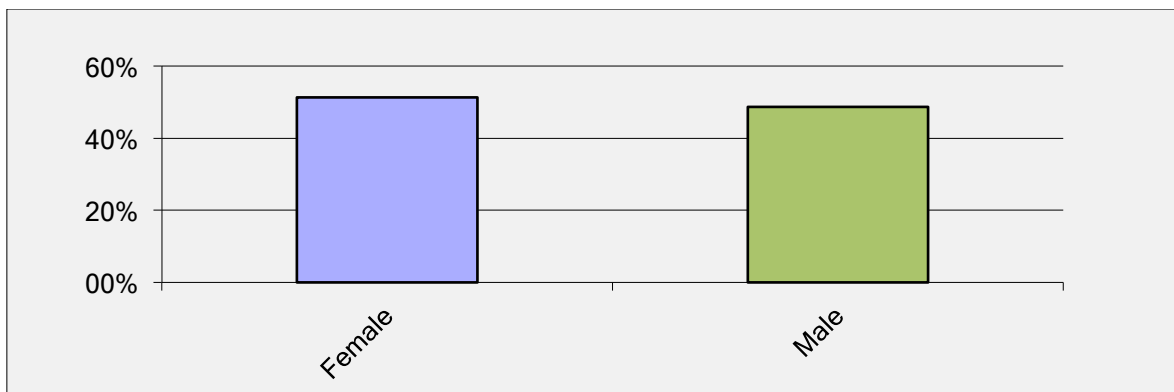


Figure 4: What is your gender?

4.1.4. Education

From the female population, 20% have no more than a high school degree, 10% have some college, but no degree, 44% have a Bachelors degree, and 26% are graduates. In the case of the male population, 3% did not complete high school, 7% have no more than a high school degree, 8% have some college, but no degree, 8% have an Associate degree, 48% have a Bachelor degree, and 25% are graduates. Basically, most of the responses come from people who have at least a Bachelor degree.

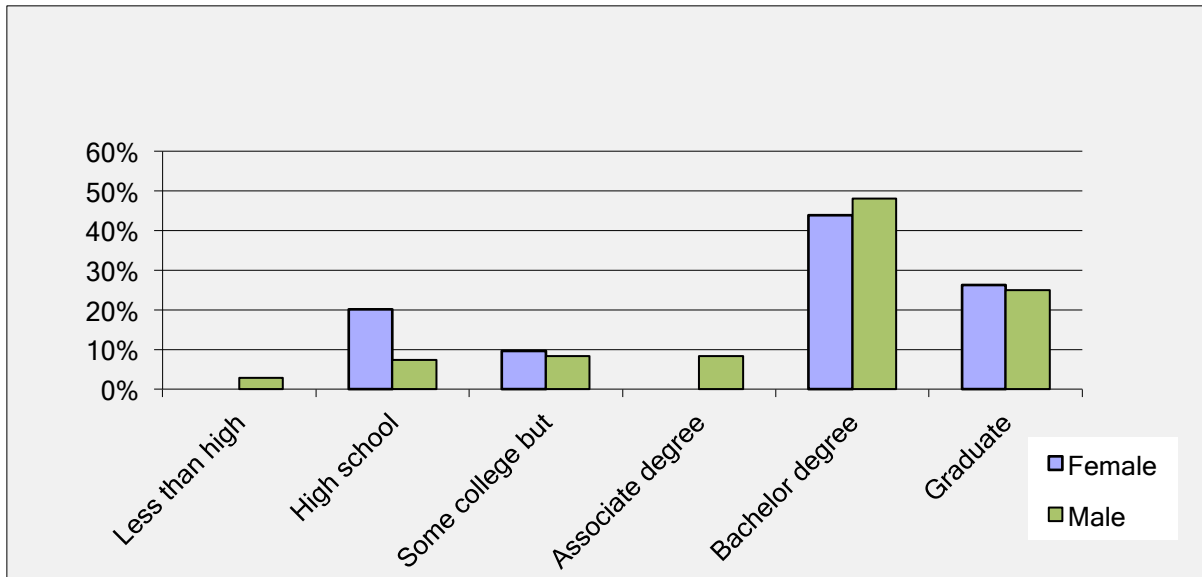


Figure 5: “What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?” According to Gender

The total percentages and distributions of education levels can be observed in table 3.

Table 3: What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

| What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received? | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Less than high school degree | 1,4% | 3 |
| High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED) | 14,0% | 31 |
| Some college but no degree | 9,0% | 20 |
| Associate degree | 4,1% | 9 |
| Bachelor degree | 45,9% | 102 |
| Graduate degree | 25,7% | 57 |
| answered question | | 222 |
| skipped question | | 1 |

4.2. Professions

Likewise, participants in the study have different professions. According to the data gathered, the highest number of responses came from people working in business/management/administration related areas with 38% of representation and another 35% are students. On the other hand, 7% are engineers, and another 8% work in science related fields. The 12% left work in other areas not listed in the questionnaire, but includes Chefs, Pilots, The Military, and Fashion designers among others. Furthermore, 23% are professionally involved with environmental protection and/or sustainable development. Categorizing the professions of participants is very helpful because it allows identifying differences and similarities between the different groups. Throughout the data analysis process, the different professions are compared and examined according to their own characteristics; for example, students are assumed to have the lowest income level and are the youngest population in the study.

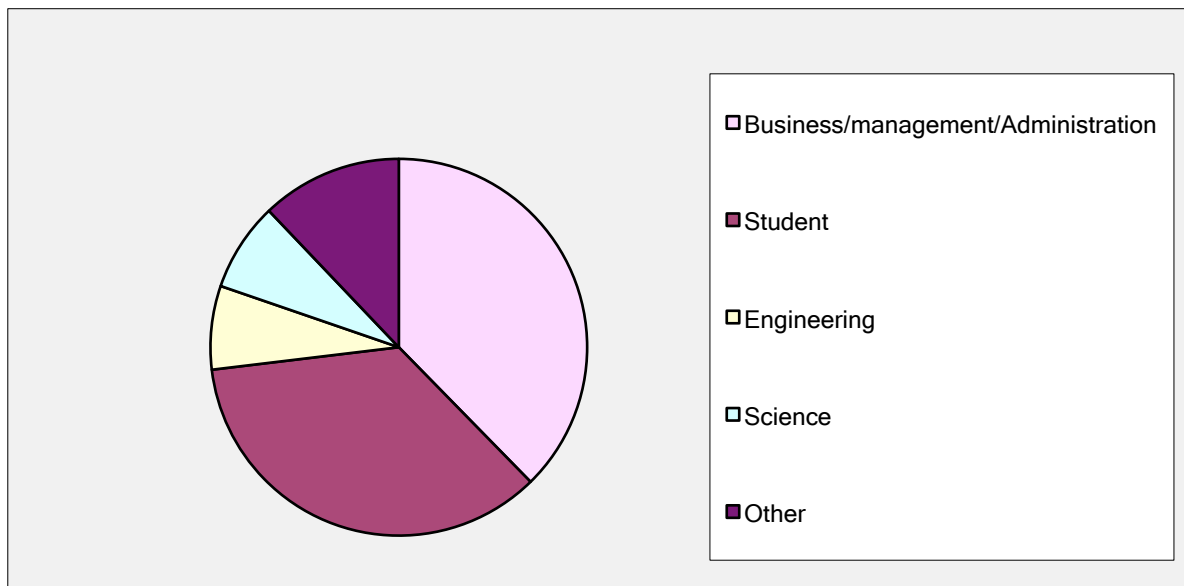


Figure 6: What is your profession

4.3. Section B- Environmental behavior

Section B aims at identifying the overall behavior of participants towards the environment and more specifically toward green products. The idea is to analyze whether or not consumers already have in mind the environmental effects they may provoke before purchasing a new product. For this analysis, the sample population may be divided into different categories in order to interpret the data according to gender, age, profession etc.

When asked “What are the three most important aspects when buying a product?” Quality, Health and Convenience were the most frequently selected characteristics with 195, 95 and 101 votes respectively. Therefore, these are the three most influential factors shaping the participants’

purchasing decision. Other important factors include Low Prices (93), Style (66), Environmental Friendliness (58), Brand (55), and Social Responsibility (30).

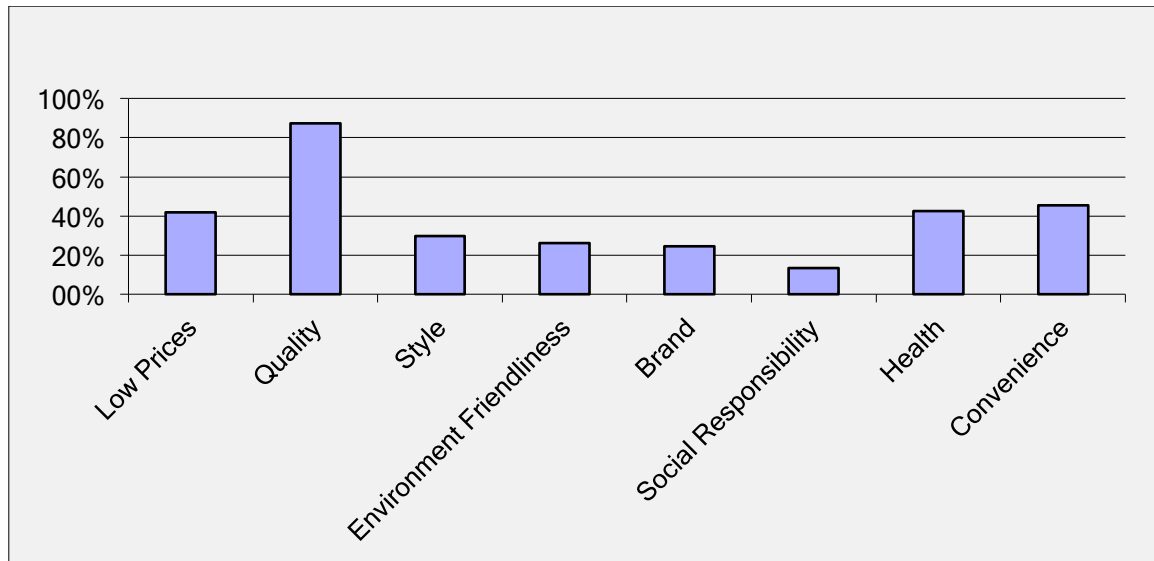


Figure 7: What are the three most important aspects when you buy a product?

Figure 7 shows the factors that influence the purchasing decision of participants in general. However, in order to gain more inferences in this area, a Mann-Whitney U-test has been performed and shows that although there are similarities in some aspects, there are significant differences between men and women in more than one category. While there are not significant differences in Brand and Health, men tend to be more price and style sensitive than women. On the other hand, women pay more attention to the quality of the product. Moreover, women tend to consider more environmental and social aspects than men when buying new products. Even though convenience was one of the most important factors, women gave it more importance than men. (See figure 8)

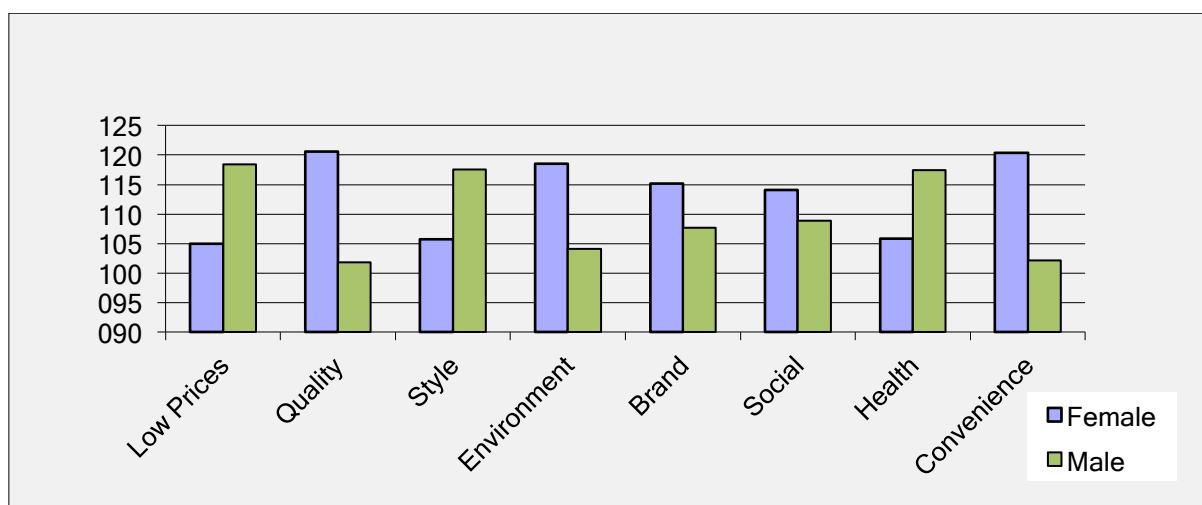


Figure 8: "What are the three most important aspects when you buy a product?" according to gender

The following table shows the results from the Mann - Whitney U-test in more detail and the difference between the two genders analyzed above. It is clear that the p-values for Quality, Environmental Friendliness, and Convenience are lower than 0.05; therefore, indicating significant difference between both genders.

Table 4: Mann-Whitney U-test “What are the three most important aspects when you buy a product?” according to gender

| | Low Prices | Quality | Style | Environment Friendliness | Brand | Social Responsibility | Health | Convenience |
|------------------------|------------|---------|--------|--------------------------|--------|-----------------------|--------|-------------|
| Mann-Whitney U | 54060 | 511500 | 55020 | 53550 | 57390 | 58680 | 551400 | 51420 |
| Z | -1.835 | -3.785 | -1.727 | -2.201 | -1.166 | -1.017 | -1.566 | -2.458 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | .067 | .000 | .084 | .028 | .244 | .309 | .117 | .014 |

Overall, it is deductible that environmental and social aspects are not the priority in this case for neither men nor women since they are among the factors with the lowest votes. Nevertheless, women tend to be more environmentally and socially sensitive than men. Remarkably, other characteristics have a greater influence in the decision making process of the participants. With this initial observation, it is possible to perform other tests that will yield more refined results.

Participants where asked whether or not they are aware of green products in the purchasing process. The results show that 57.8% of the participants are usually aware of these types of products and 42,2% are not. However, in order to obtain more detailed information on the different responses, a χ^2 analysis has been performed taking as the fixed variable the professions of the participants and yielded the following data:

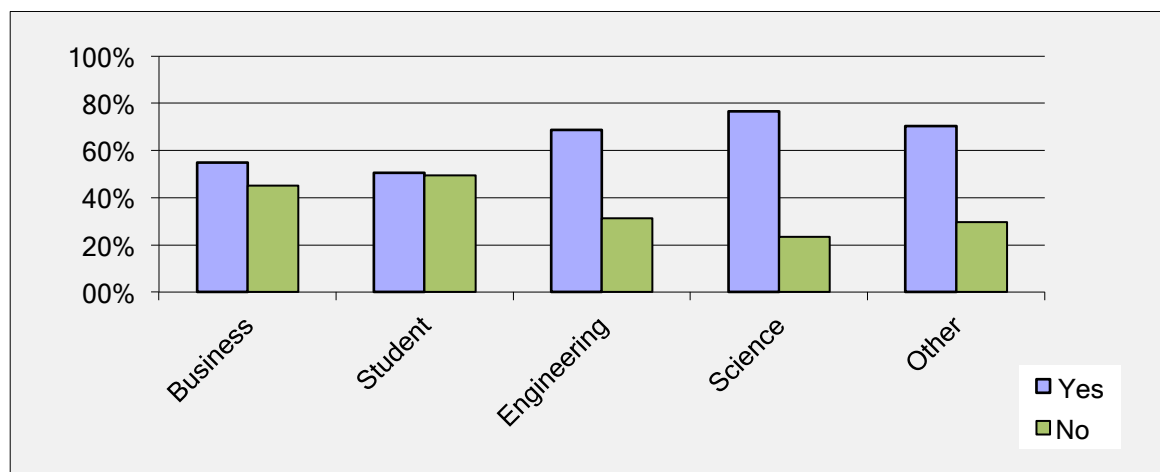


Figure 9: “When buying, are you usually aware of green/bio/eco-friendly products?” According to professions

According to figure 9, it is noticeable that people working in professions related to the engineering sector, science and other areas (i.e. Chefs, Pilots, The Military etc.) are more aware of these products than students and people working on business related fields. 76,5% of the participants working in science related jobs and 70,4% in “Other” professions are usually aware of Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products. 68,8% of the participants with an engineering profession are also frequently aware of these products. However, responses from participants working in Business related fields and students, 45,2% and 49,4% respectively, suggest that they are not usually conscious about green products; though they are the largest population in the sample.

Overall, Business related professions and students have the largest representation in the sample; however, they present a very significant difference in terms of participants who are usually aware of green products with almost half of them unaware. Nevertheless, being aware of green products is one aspect, but it is important also to identify whether or not participants have bought this type of products consciously. For this reason, questions in the survey are aimed to address these issues, and the results were as follows:

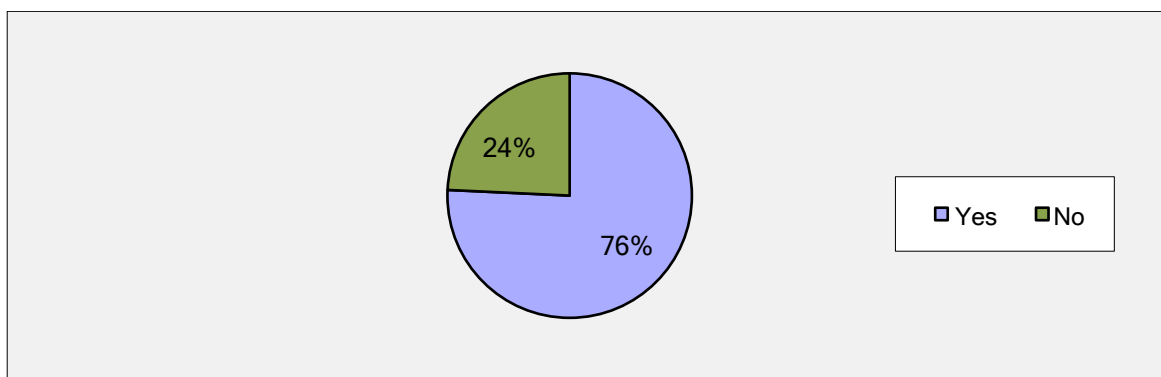


Figure 10: Have you consciously bought or have considered buying Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products?

Figure 10 shows that 76% of respondents have consciously bought green products and 24% have not. However, to get a more detailed insight, a χ^2 analysis has been performed and the distribution according to professions and gender are clearly visible. According to the results, 77,4% of participants working in business related fields have consciously bought green products at some point in time. Moreover, 68,4% of students in the sample have also bought green products consciously. Remarkably, participants working in areas such as science and other fields, have the highest percentages of people buying green products consciously with 82,4% and 92,6%. This means that participants who are usually aware of green products have consciously bought or have considered buying them at some point in time.

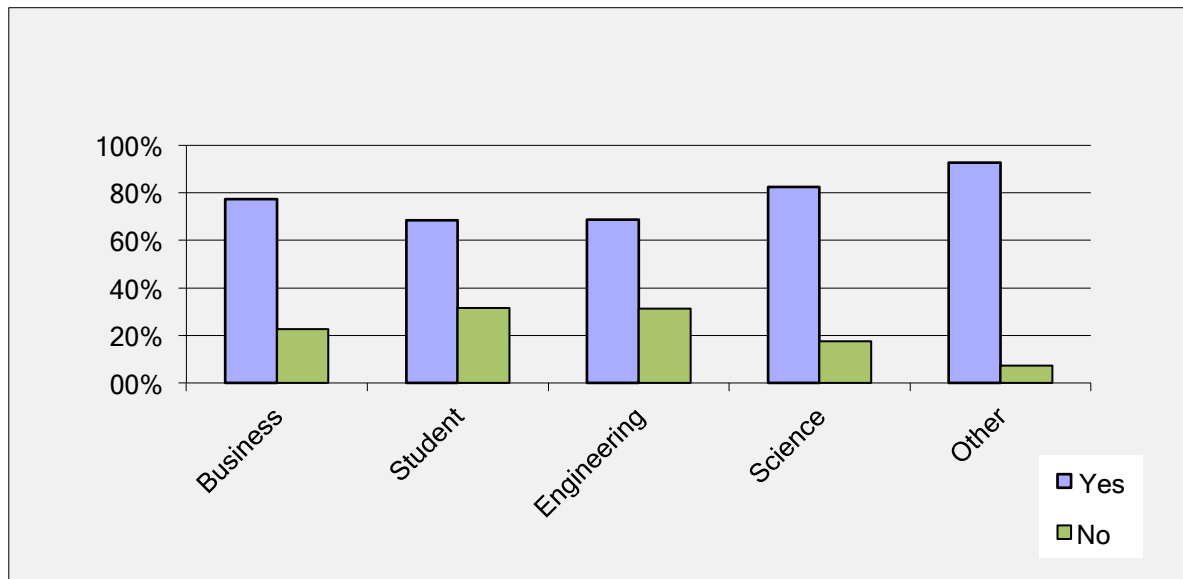


Figure 11: “Have you consciously bought or have considered buying Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products?” According to professions

The above graph shows that there is a tendency to buy green products, especially when people are aware of them. This information is very significant for analyzing the effects of green marketing strategies on the consumer decision-making, which will be analyzed in section C of this chapter. It is clear the consistency between professions that are aware of green products and their purchasing behavior towards green products. In contrast, it is also clear that the majority of respondents who have unconsciously purchased or have not considered buying green products come from the students. Moreover, a 2-way ANOVA has been performed to identify the differences between the male and the female population within the different professions. The results showed no significant difference between male and female participants. Most of respondents from both genders agreed that they have consciously bought or considered buying green products. However, even though there is not a significant difference, women tend to be a bit more conscious about purchasing green products than men especially in engineering and science related working fields.

With the purpose of obtaining more relevant information to test hypothesis 1 in the research, it is important to identify if participants consider the effects of their purchasing behavior on the environment and society before buying a product. The results, as shown on figure 12, demonstrate that participants usually have a neutral position with regards to the environment and society. However, there is a significant percentage of respondents that take these effects into account before making a purchase. On the other hand, 28,5% of respondents do not consider environmental and social implications whatsoever.

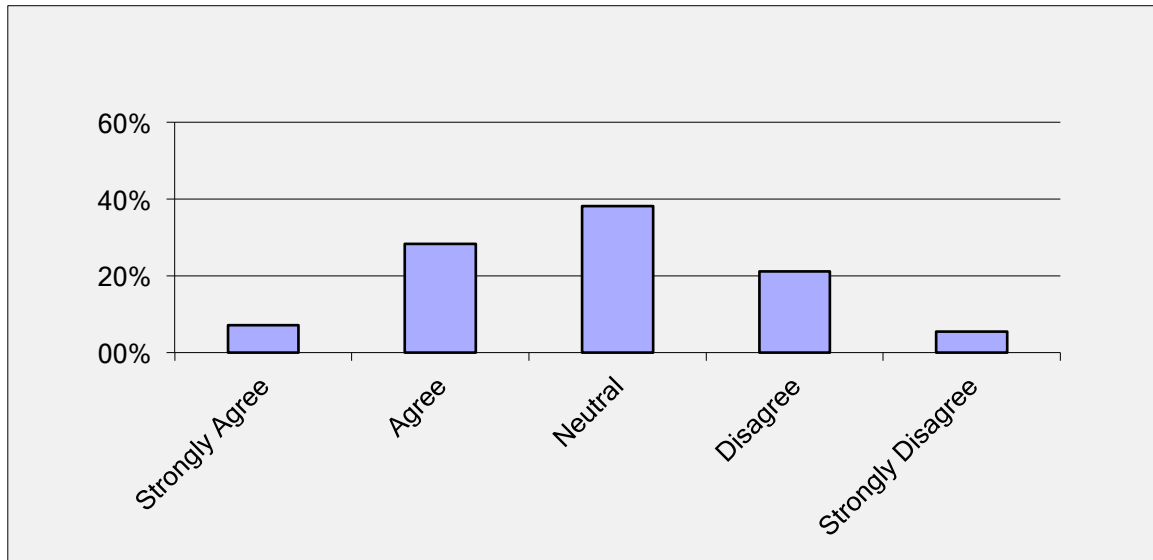


Figure 12: The last time you went shopping, did you consider the effect on the environment and society before purchasing the product?

Being more specific, results from a 2-way ANOVA show the difference between men and women in terms of environmental and social considerations according to professions. As is evident, there are significant differences in some aspects. Overall, women tend to consider environmental and social aspects more than men, especially women working in engineering related fields. However, male participants working in science related fields take the environment and society into higher consideration than the rest of respondents before buying a product. 13.7% of the variation in considering the effect on the environment and society before purchasing a product can be explained by the variability of gender and profession.

Table 5: “The last time you went shopping, did you consider the effect on the environment and society before purchasing the product?” significant difference according to gender and profession

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|---------------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .180 | .137 |
| Profession | .010 | |
| Gender * Profession | <0.001 | |

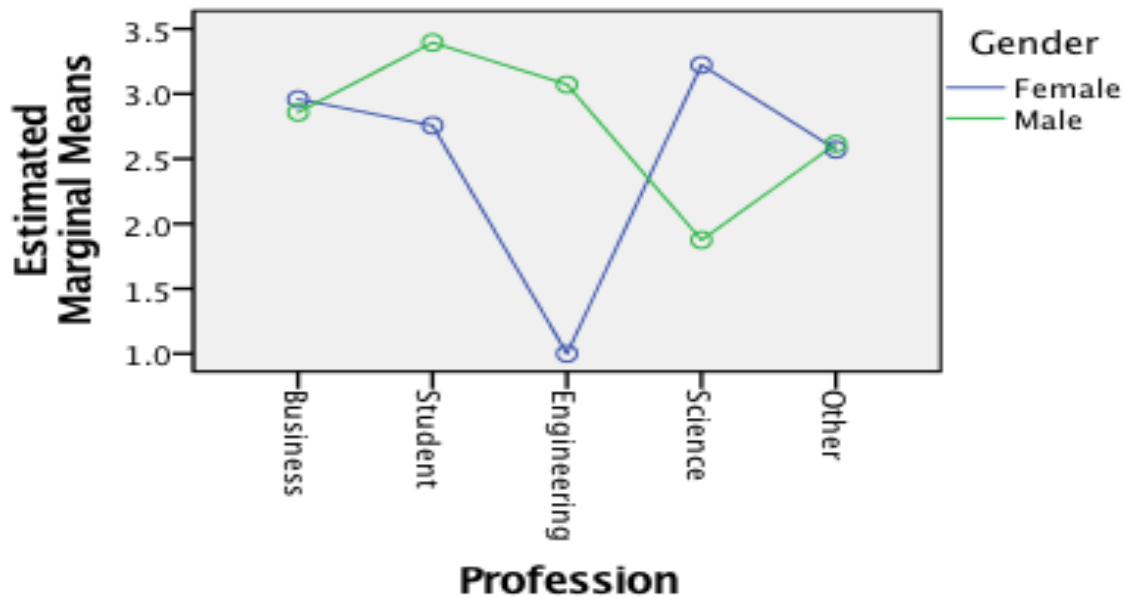


Figure 13: “The last time you went shopping, did you consider the effect on the environment and society before purchasing the product?” According to Gender

Interestingly, about 40% of respondents felt environmentally correct about their last purchase; only 17,5% felt environmentally guilty. However, a big percentage of respondents (43,5%) neither felt guilty nor correct about the products they bought most recently. Furthermore, after performing a 2-way ANOVA, the results show that there are statistical differences between men and women and between academic titles in terms of feelings towards the environment. According to the data, women tend to feel less environmentally guilty than men; nevertheless, the overall level of guiltiness is not very substantial. 12.7% of the feelings about the last purchase decision are influenced by the variability in a person’s gender and education. In the table below, it is clear that only male individuals with less than a high school degree (3 people in total) felt strongly correct about their most recent purchase in terms of environment; in contrast, men who are currently studying or have studied in college felt guiltier. Yet, the majority of responses range from feeling environmentally correct to being neutral.

Table 6: “You felt environmentally correct about your last purchasing decision” according to gender and education

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | |
|--|--------|------|----------------|-----|
| Dependent Variable: You felt environmentally correct about your last purchasing decision | | | | |
| Education | Gender | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
| Less than high school degree | Male | 1.00 | .000 | 3 |
| | Total | 1.00 | .000 | 3 |
| High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED) | Female | 2.48 | .730 | 23 |
| | Male | 2.38 | .518 | 8 |
| | Total | 2.43 | .624 | 31 |
| Some college but no degree | Female | 2.55 | .522 | 11 |
| | Male | 3.67 | 1.323 | 9 |
| | Total | 3.11 | .923 | 20 |
| Associate degree | Male | 2.89 | .928 | 9 |
| | Total | 2.89 | .928 | 9 |
| Bachelor degree | Female | 2.92 | .900 | 50 |
| | Male | 2.90 | .995 | 52 |
| | Total | 2.91 | .948 | 102 |
| Graduate | Female | 2.60 | .968 | 30 |
| | Male | 2.89 | .698 | 27 |
| | Total | 2.75 | .833 | 57 |
| Total | Female | 2.65 | .823 | 114 |
| | Male | 2.96 | .967 | 108 |
| | Total | 2.81 | .895 | 222 |

Table 7: “You felt environmentally correct about your last purchasing decision” significant difference according to gender and education

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|--------------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .035 | .127 |
| Education | <0.001 | |
| Gender * Education | .053 | |

The data analyzed so far is very important to test the first hypothesis in this research; however, it is also indispensable to know whether participants preferred green products to regular products the last time they went shopping or vice versa. The results show that there is a significant percentage of participants who actually preferred regular products rather than Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products

with 27,1% of representation in the sample. Nevertheless, 46,8% agreed that they preferred green products. Again, an important percentage of people did not care about products being green or conventional.

To be more specific, a 2-way ANOVA has been performed taking into account variables such as genders and professions. One can notice that there are statistical differences between genders and also between the different professions each one exercises. There is a strong preference for green products from women working in engineering related fields. On the other hand, students from the male population represent the highest number of people preferring regular products to green products. 10% of the variation in preferences for Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products can be explained by the variability in gender and profession. The opinions of participants differ significantly and can be observed in the following figure.

Table 8: “The last time you shopped, you preferred Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products over regular products” according to gender and profession

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|---------------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .006 | .100 |
| Profession | .120 | |
| Gender * Profession | .046 | |

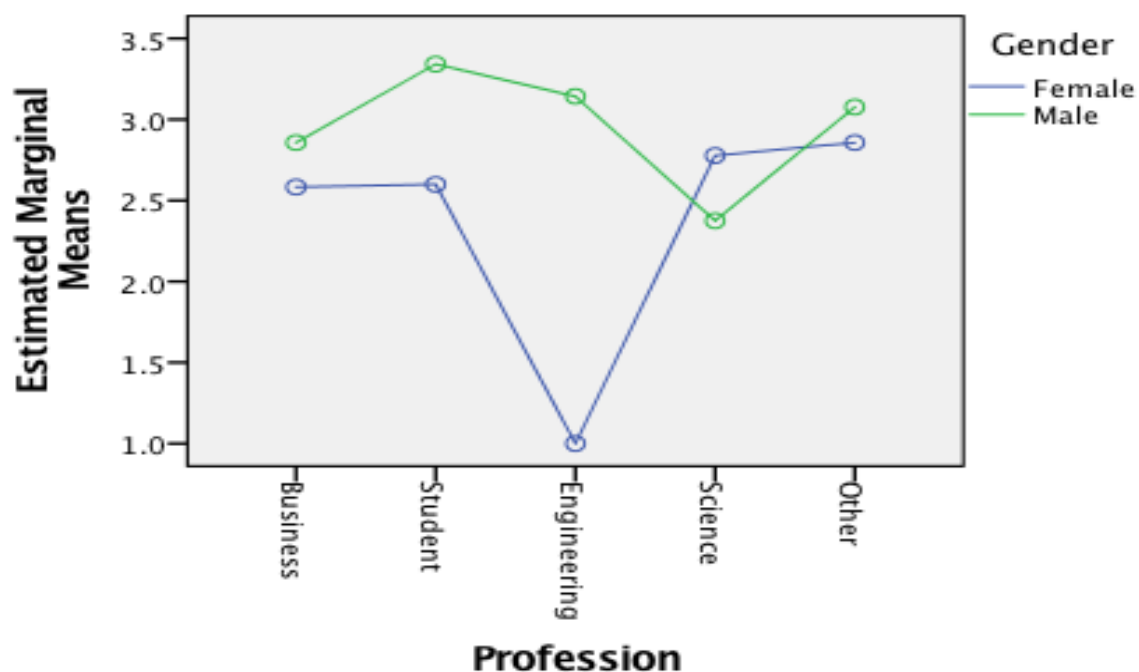


Figure 14: “The last time you shopped, you preferred Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products over regular products” according to gender and profession

So far, according to the data obtained, one can observe that there is an overall preference for green products among the participants. In general, there are more participants aware of green products and have consciously purchased them. Though there is a significant percentage of respondents who do not consider the impact of their purchasing behavior on the environment and do not really feel guilty about it.

The results show that there is a clear tendency from the participants to prefer green products to conventional products proving right the first hypothesis of this research. However, in order to provide more certainty, the next section delivers more details and help to further test these preferences as well.

4.4. Section C- Influence of green marketing tools on consumers

This session analyses the effects caused by green marketing tools such as bio certificates or eco labels on the participants. Additionally, with the purpose of further testing hypothesis 1 in this research, participants were asked a set of questions aimed to finally prove it right or wrong. The main objective is to identify whether or not participants tend to buy products advertised as green goods and moreover what type of consumers they are; for instance, impulsive buyers or passive buyers.

In terms of trust, participants are more confident in products containing green certificates than in regular products. According to the results, most participants agreed with the statement “When you see eco labels or bio certificates on the package of a product, you trust it more than regular products”. Only 13,5%, approximately, do not trust products containing such certifications. However, there is a significant amount of respondents whose position towards trusting green products more than regular products is neutral; this can be interpreted in different ways and will be discussed more in-depth in the next chapter.

Table 9: When you see eco labels or Bio certificates in the package of a product, you trust it more than regular products

| When you see eco labels or Bio certificates in the package of a product, you trust it more than regular products | | |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Strongly Agree | 15,2% | 34 |
| Agree | 47,1% | 105 |
| Neutral | 24,2% | 54 |
| Disagree | 11,7% | 26 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1,8% | 4 |
| answered question | | 223 |
| skipped question | | 0 |

Moreover, there is not a significant difference between genders and between levels of education regarding trusting green products; however, there are significant differences between men and women according to their academic title. 15.2% of the variation in trust towards products containing Eco or Bio certificates can be explained by the variability of a person's gender and education. As shown in the figure below, women trust products with Green/Bio/Eco-friendly certificates more than regular products; especially graduates. On the other hand, men have a more dispersed distribution within educational levels. For example, male individuals with a high school diploma, associate or bachelor degrees trust green products more than regular products, but men who do not have a high school degree or are graduates share a neutral position regarding this matter.

Table 10: "When you see Eco labels or Bio certificates in the package of a product, you trust it more than regular products" significant difference according to gender and education

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|------------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | 0,647 | .152 |
| Education | 0,221 | |
| Gender*Education | <0.001 | |

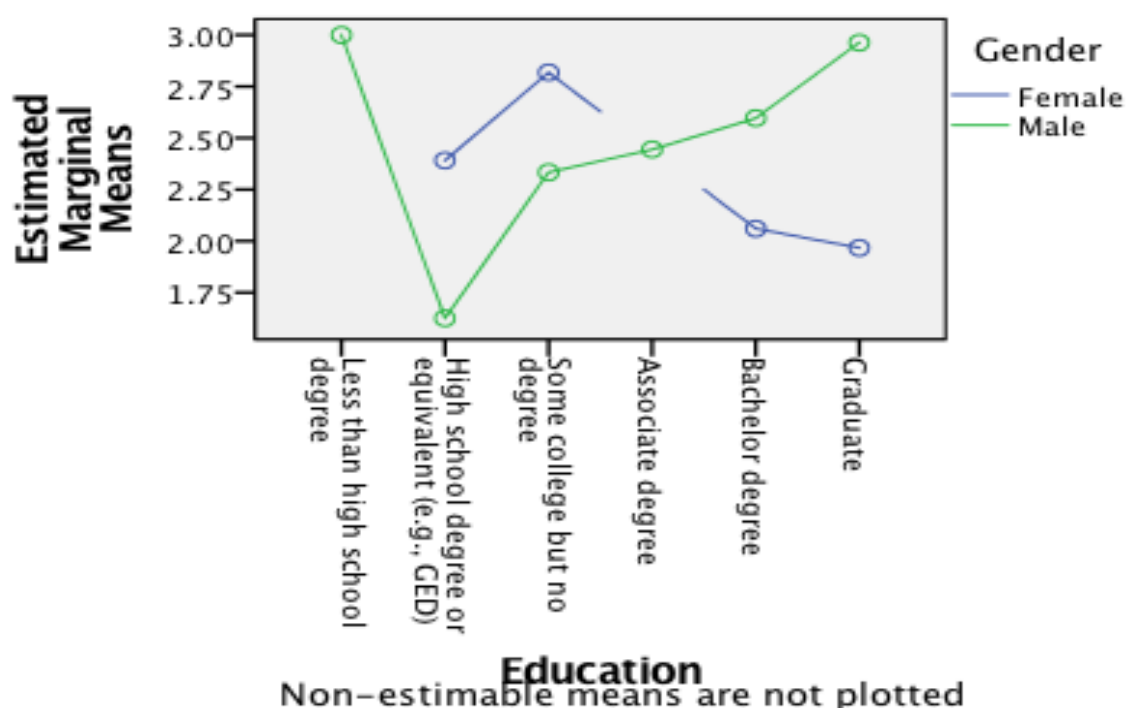


Figure 15: "When you see eco labels or Bio certificates in the package of a product, you trust it more than regular products" according to gender and education

As seen in the figure above, the estimated marginal means of each category correspond mostly to a neutral or positive attitude towards trusting products containing Green/Bio/Eco-friendly certificates. Nevertheless, the results vary significantly according to gender and profession.

Given the trust participants have in green products, it is helpful to analyze whether their purchasing decision is directly based on bio/eco certificates or not. The data shows that more than 40% of the participants base their purchasing decision on green labels when available. On the other hand, 18,8% disagreed and 5,8% strongly disagreed with this matter and do not take Green/Bio/Eco-friendly certificates into account when buying new products. In the following table, one can see the distributions of each category in terms of Green/Bio/Eco-friendly label-based purchasing behavior.

Table 11: You base your purchasing decisions on Eco Labels or Bio certificates if available

| You base your purchasing decisions on Eco Labels or Bio certificates if available | | |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Strongly Agree | 4,0% | 9 |
| Agree | 37,2% | 83 |
| Neutral | 34,1% | 76 |
| Disagree | 18,8% | 42 |
| Strongly Disagree | 5,8% | 13 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 223 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 0 |

In order to perform a more detailed analysis, a 2-way ANOVA has been implemented. This test has helped to identify the differences between the responses from male and female participants and between the different professions each of them exercise. The results show that there are significant differences between both genders and between professions. 28.4% of the variation in people basing their purchase decision on Eco labels or Bio certificates can be explained by the variability of profession and gender. It is clear that women tend to base their purchasing decisions on Green/Bio/Eco-friendly labels if available more than men; especially women working in engineering related fields. On the other hand, male students are the least to take green certifications into account when buying products (See appendix 8.4).

Table 12: “You base your purchasing decisions on Eco Labels or Bio certificates if available” significant difference according to gender and profession

| Source | P-Value | R² |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Gender | <0,001 | .284 |
| Profession | <0,001 | |
| Gender * Profession | <0,001 | |

Moreover, the study has also found out that women working in engineering related fields tend to also be impulsive buyers. The results give indications that at least 48% of the total participants buy products at first sight if they like them; especially women. Nevertheless, another 24% can be considered passive buyers and tend to evaluate more their final decision before making the purchase

(See appendix 8.5). The figure below shows the estimated means of responses with regards to consumer types.

Table 13: “When you see a product for the first time and you really like it, you buy it immediately/ as soon as possible” significant difference according to gender and professions

| Source | P-value | R ² |
|-------------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | 0,018 | .068 |
| Profession | 0,608 | |
| Gender*Profession | 0,729 | |

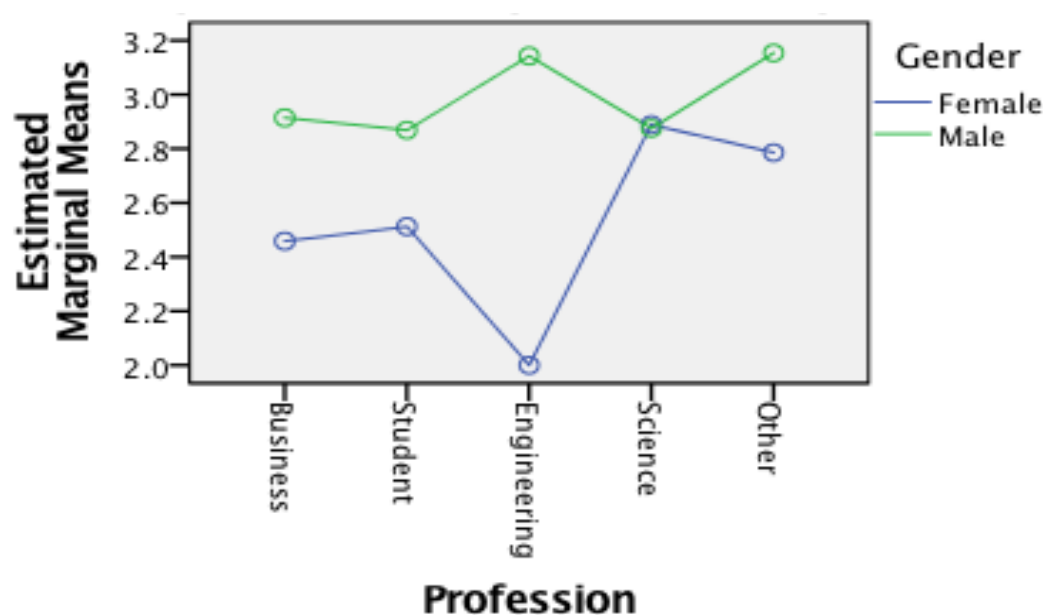


Figure 16: “When you see a product for the first time and you really like it, you buy it immediately/ as soon as possible” according to gender and professions

Based on the results above, one can notice there are significant differences between both genders in terms of consumer types. Some are impulsive buyers and others are passive buyers. However, most of them tend to immediately purchase products when they like one, especially women. Men are not as impulsive as women, but from these results on this study one cannot say that it is because men think more about the pros and cons of their purchase; there could be other reasons as well.

After analyzing the second part of the survey to further test the first hypothesis that people in Austria prefer green products to regular products and the second hypothesis that green marketing tools such as Green/Bio/Eco-friendly certificates may change these decisions, it is clear that participants fancy green products more than conventional products. Likewise, there is a tendency to trust and prefer Green/Bio/Eco-friendly certified products more than regular products. Therefore, green marketing tools such as green certifications and labels have an effect on the purchasing behavior of participants. Yet, the results obtained so far are not fully certain to say that this influence

is positive or negative since the outcomes vary according to different variables (i.e. education, age, gender, city, etc.) and there are cases of skepticism and avoidance towards green products present in the study as well. As a result, further analyses and tests are necessary to study other aspects related to Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products.

The results also show a significant percentage of participants who immediately buy products they like. This can imply that products with Green/Bio/Eco-friendly certificates are bought even faster due to the amount of respondents preferring them. In line with the data above, it is interesting to see that even though there is a preference for products which are environmentally certified, there is also an important number of responses indicating that participants do not weigh the environmental and social impact of their purchasing behavior before buying a product.

After having proved the first and second hypotheses in this research correct, it is necessary to continue testing the third and fourth hypotheses, which state that green consumerism creates a feeling of responsibility towards the environment and green consumption can signal high social status. The inferences gained to prove these hypotheses right or wrong are analyzed in the following section.

4.5. Section D- Identifying conspicuous consumption in green consumerism

This section aims at analyzing participants' feelings after they purchased green products. The idea is to test whether or not respondents have feelings that can be related to conspicuous consumption and, of course, give a stronger insight to answer the research question in this study. For this reason, several questions from the survey address participants' feelings towards green consumers, how they feel after they purchase green products and what they think about green products. The data gathered helped testing if green products can signal social status and how green consumers are perceived in Austria.

First, it is important to know if participants anticipated talking to other people about their purchase before actually buying the product. The results indicate that around 50% of the participants thought about telling others about their purchase. On the contrary, roughly 16% did not anticipate sharing that information.

Table 14: The last time you bought a significant product, you anticipated talking to others about it - without mentioning Green/Bio/Environmental issues

| The last time you bought a significant product, you anticipated talking to others about it - without mentioning Green/Bio/Environmental issues | | |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Strongly Agree | 9,9% | 22 |
| Agree | 39,9% | 89 |
| Neutral | 33,6% | 75 |
| Disagree | 14,3% | 32 |
| Strongly Disagree | 2,2% | 5 |
| answered question | | 223 |
| skipped question | | 0 |

Within the results, there is not a significant difference between genders, but there is a significant difference between professions. Participants working in business related areas and other fields tend to be more private about their purchasing behavior, however, their position is mostly neutral. On the contrary, students, engineers and people working in sciences kept in mind talking to others about the product they were about to purchase. 10.9% of this behavior variation can be explained by the variability in someone's profession. This shows that a significant part of the respondents not only think about their needs, but also about other people's reactions. Since there is not a significant difference between genders, this can be assumed for both men and women.

Table 15: "The last time you bought a significant product, you anticipated talking to others about it - without mentioning Green/Bio/Environmental issues" significant difference according to gender and profession

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|----------------------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .475 | .109 |
| Profession | .048 | |
| Gender * Profession | .028 | |

In order to identify possible relations between conspicuous consumption and green consumerism, participants were asked if they anticipated talking to others about their purchase specifically mentioning Green/Bio/Environmental issues. The results indicate that approximately 25% of the participants anticipated it; that is a reduction of 25% when compared to situations where they did not mention these issues. Additionally, the percentage of people that did not anticipate it doubled from 16% to 36% (see appendix 8.6). This is an important input to answer the research questions since one can already identify the changes in consumers' behavior towards regular products and green products.

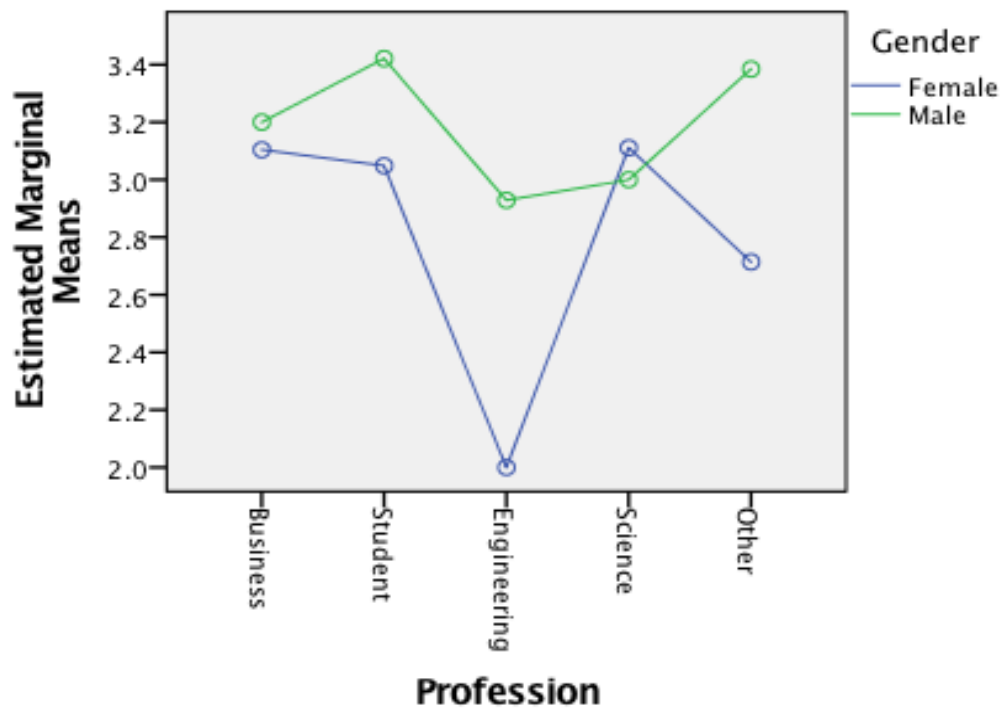


Figure 17: “The last time you bought a significant product, you anticipated talking to others about it - mentioning Green/Bio/Environmental issues” according to gender and professions

Figure 17 shows the results from a 2-way ANOVA identifying the differences between participants who anticipated talking to others about their last purchase mentioning Green/Bio/Environmental issues. The data indicates that there is a significant difference between men and women, but there is not a statistical variation between professions.

Table 16: “The last time you bought a significant product, you anticipated talking to others about it - mentioning Green/Bio/Environmental issues” significant difference according to gender and profession

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|---------------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .038 | .055 |
| Profession | .281 | |
| Gender * Profession | .421 | |

A Wilcoxon test was performed to establish the relationship that may exist between people who buy products anticipating talking to other mentioning Green/Bio/Environmental issues and without mentioning it. The results suggest that there is a significant difference in both situations. Cases where people anticipated talking to others about their purchase without mentioning Green/Bio/Environmental were quite common. On the other hand, most of the participants shared a neutral position in circumstances where they anticipated mentioning these issues.

Table 17: Wilcoxon Test “people anticipating talking about bought products mentioning and without mentioning Green/Bio/Environmental issues”

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| Z | -5.534 |
| P-Value | <0,001 |

With the purpose of further exploring conspicuous consumption patterns within the sample population in this research, participants were asked if they think whether or not people will notice the products they buy. In order to identify differences and similarities within respondents towards regular and green products, the questions are specific for each type of product (conventional or green products). There is a high percentage of people who do not care about others noticing the products they buy. Only a quarter of the total participants worry about the opinion of others. Being more specific about green products, there is a similar trend. Most of the participants either have a neutral position or do not care at all about other people noticing their green purchase. The total percentages can be observed in the tables below.

Table 18: When you buy a regular product, you think about whether or not other people will notice it

| When you buy a regular product, you think about whether or not other people will notice it | | |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Strongly Agree | 5,0% | 11 |
| Agree | 19,8% | 44 |
| Neutral | 35,6% | 79 |
| Disagree | 29,7% | 66 |
| Strongly Disagree | 9,9% | 22 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 222 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 1 |
| <i>skipped percent</i> | | 0,33% |

Table 19: When you buy a Green/Bio/Eco-friendly, you think about whether or not other people will notice it

| When you buy a " Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product", you think about whether or not other people will notice it | | |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Strongly Agree | 1,8% | 4 |
| Agree | 17,5% | 39 |
| Neutral | 37,7% | 84 |
| Disagree | 31,8% | 71 |
| Strongly Disagree | 11,2% | 25 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 223 |

Even though there are similar patterns for both products, people tend to behave differently about green products; respondents tend to take a neutral position. For example, there are more radical responses when the questions are about regular products than green products. This has been the case for the past few questions. According to a 2-way ANOVA, there are significant differences between the age groups in the sample. 19,3% of the variation in people caring about others noticing when they buy a regular product can be explained by the variability on their gender and age. For instance, older people tend to care more about others noticing the products they buy. However, there is not a significant difference between genders, so this is the case for both men and women.

Table 20: “When you buy a regular product, you think about whether or not other people will notice it” significant difference according to gender and age

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|--------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .637 | .193 |
| Age | <0.001 | |
| Gender * Age | <0.001 | |

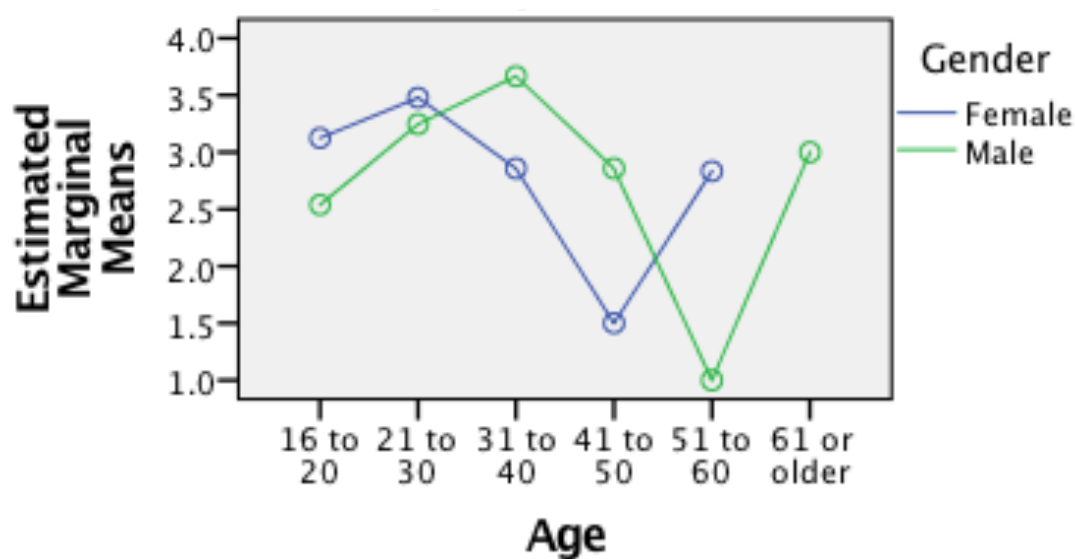


Figure 18: “When you buy a regular product, you think about whether or not other people will notice it” according to gender and age

A similar result was obtained for green products, but as mentioned before, the marginal means ranged between 2 and 4 while marginal means for regular products ranged from 1 to 3.8. This means that there were not radical positions or extreme cases where people really worry about others noticing their green purchasing behavior. Just like in the previous figure, older people worried more about others noticing the green products they buy than young individuals. Again, there was not a significant difference between genders, but there was between the different age groups in the

sample.

Table 21: “When you buy a Green/Bio/Eco-friendly, you think about whether or not other people will notice it” significant difference according to gender and age

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|--------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .838 | .093 |
| Age | .036 | |
| Gender * Age | .037 | |

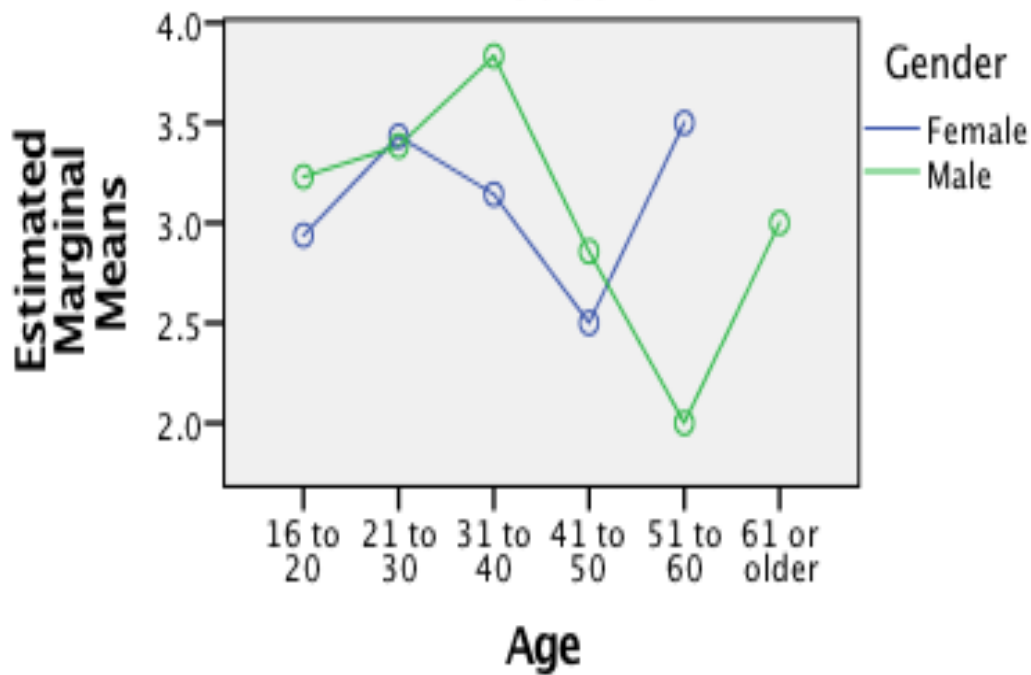


Figure 19: “When you buy a Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product, you think about whether or not other people will notice it” according to gender and age

Table 22: “You prefer to buy products that most of the other people also buy” according to gender and age

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | |
|---|----------|------|----------------|-----|
| Dependent Variable: You prefer to buy products that most of the other people also buy | | | | |
| Gender | Age | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
| Female | 16 to 20 | 3.00 | .730 | 16 |
| | 21 to 30 | 3.47 | 1.010 | 74 |
| | 31 to 40 | 3.00 | .784 | 14 |
| | 41 to 50 | 3.00 | 1.155 | 4 |
| | 51 to 60 | 3.00 | 1.265 | 6 |
| | Total | 3.31 | .979 | 114 |

| | | | | |
|-------|-------------|------|-------|-----|
| Male | 16 to 20 | 3.00 | 1.225 | 13 |
| | 21 to 30 | 3.22 | .976 | 65 |
| | 31 to 40 | 3.61 | .778 | 18 |
| | 41 to 50 | 2.71 | 1.254 | 7 |
| | 51 to 60 | 4.00 | .000 | 3 |
| | 61 or older | 4.00 | .000 | 2 |
| | Total | 3.26 | .999 | 108 |
| Total | 16 to 20 | 3.00 | .964 | 29 |
| | 21 to 30 | 3.35 | .999 | 139 |
| | 31 to 40 | 3.34 | .827 | 32 |
| | 41 to 50 | 2.82 | 1.168 | 11 |
| | 51 to 60 | 3.33 | 1.118 | 9 |
| | 61 or older | 4.00 | .000 | 2 |
| | Total | 3.28 | .987 | 222 |

Independently of being regular or green products, it is noteworthy to identify whether participants tend to buy products that other people also buy or if they have their own criteria and do not base their purchasing decision on others' actions. The results indicate that approximately 25% of respondents agreed that they prefer to buy products that other people buy. The majority of participants however, do not base their purchasing decisions on others' actions.

According to a 2-way ANOVA, there are not significant differences between genders and the different age groups within the sample population. This indicates that all answers from the participants were similar and effectively most of them do not buy products because other people buy them as well. Probably there are other factors involved. Nevertheless, among all the age groups, men aged between 41 to 50 years are slightly affected by what other people purchase, however, this is very minimal.

Table 23: "You prefer to buy products that most of the other people also buy" significant difference according to gender and age

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|--------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .317 | .065 |
| Age | .296 | |
| Gender * Age | .109 | |

Trying to identify more in depth factors that influence purchasing behavior towards green products, consumers were asked if they have bought a regular product over a Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product because of the price. As it is noticeable, green products tend to be more expensive than regular products for a variety of reasons. The results indicate that for most people price is a crucial factor.

This corroborates what was established before; price is one of the most important aspects that people consider before buying a product, even more than environmental or social impacts. The majority of participants agreed and strongly agreed that they have preferred a regular product to a green product because of the price, with around 70% representation in the sample. Only around 18% have preferred green products to regular products even though the price may have been higher.

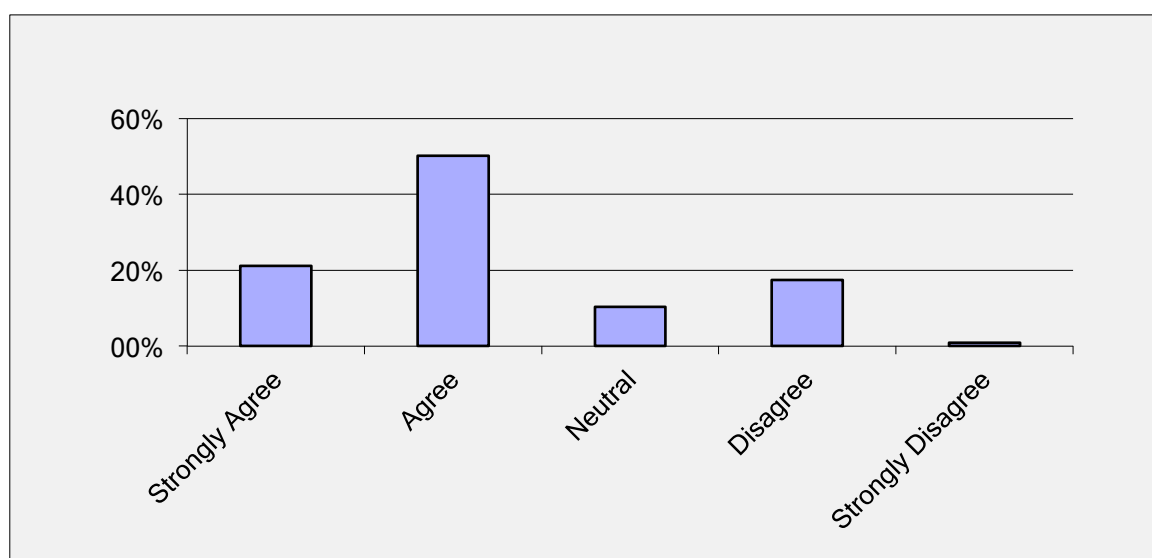


Figure 20: You have bought a regular product over a Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product because of its price

These preferences may also vary according to different situations. Therefore, a 2-way ANOVA was performed to get more details about this matter. The results suggest that there are significant differences between genders, between professions and between genders and professions. 13.7% of the variation in preference for products because of their price can be explained by the variability of a person's gender and profession. As shown in the figure below, men tend to be more price sensitive and have effectively bought regular products over green products because of the costs; especially male students. Within the female population, women who exercise professions related to science also tend to prioritize prices and have bought regular products over green products because of that. On the contrary, women working in engineering related fields do not consider the costs as a priority when purchasing new products.

Table 24: "You have bought a regular product over a Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product because of its price" significant difference according to gender and profession

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|---------------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .009 | .137 |
| Profession | .007 | |
| Gender * Profession | .017 | |

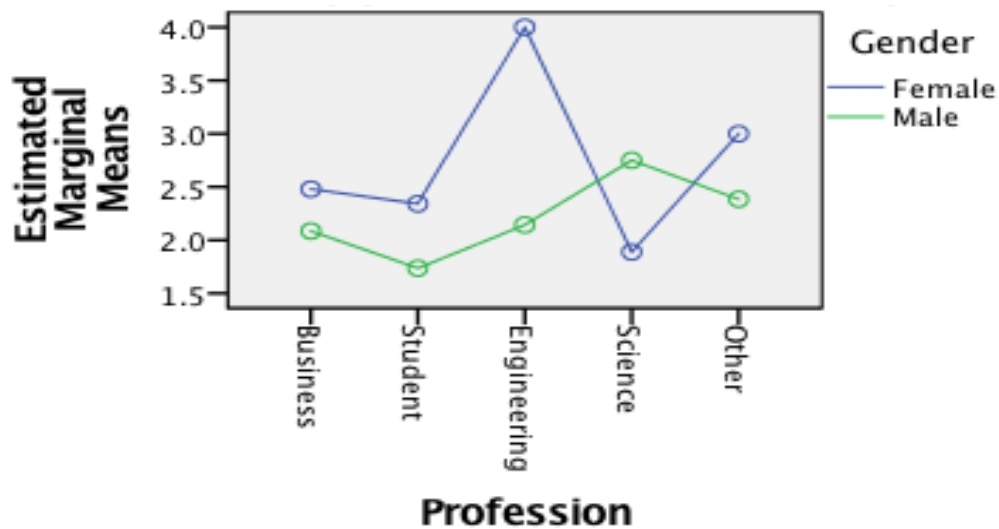


Figure 21: “You have bought a regular product over a Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product because of its price” according to gender and professions.

Of course this variation may have been also due to the type of products being purchased. Since some people are more sensitive with some goods than others, participants were asked to specify the type of product they preferred to be conventional because of the price.

Table 25: Types of products (Price)

| What type of product was this? (i.e. Electronics, food, beverage, transportation etc.) | | |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Food | 67,7% | 134 |
| Beverages | 6,1% | 12 |
| Transportation | 6,1% | 12 |
| Electronics | 12,1% | 24 |
| Cosmetics | 3,5% | 7 |
| Household | 2,0% | 4 |
| Other | 2,5% | 5 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 198 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 25 |
| <i>skipped percent</i> | | 8,2% |

Looking at the table above, it is clear that the majority of participants preferred to buy regular food products than Green/Bio/Eco-friendly certified products because of the prices. Electronics goods are also a very important category where people did prefer regular products due to prices of green products. There are, of course, many types of products not specified in the table, but according to the actual surveys, they include sports equipment, school utensils, and baby articles.

The responses suggest that quality is the most important aspect that the participants consider when buying a new product. Therefore, the respondents were asked if they have preferred regular products to Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products because of that. According to the results, about 45% of the participants have prioritized quality over environmental or social impact. This supports previous data suggesting that environmental concerns are one of the least considered aspects in the purchasing process. Only around 23% of the sample population preferred green products because they could not find regular ones with better quality or simply prioritized environment over quality (see appendix 8.8). Considering the differences between genders and professions, a 2-way ANOVA was performed to obtain more details about the responses. The results indicate that there are not significant differences between the professions exercised by the participants, but there are between genders and between genders and professions. According to the figure below, men preferred regular products to green products because of the quality, especially men working in science related areas. On the other hand, women were more neutral regarding this matter, however, female engineers preferred green products anyway. Very important, the preferences for regular products to green products due to quality properties were more frequent in food products and electronic products.

Table 26: You have bought a regular product over a Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product because of its better quality” significant difference according to gender and profession

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|----------------------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .012 | .068 |
| Profession | .256 | |
| Gender * Profession | .025 | |

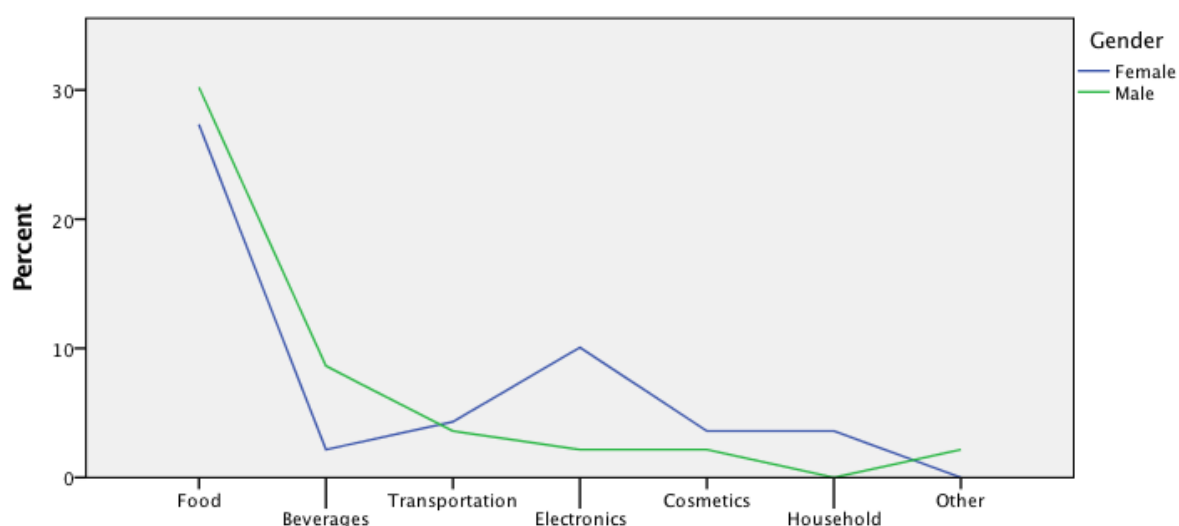


Figure 22: Type of products (Quality)

These results are interesting because they uphold what has been established before and corroborate certain theories indicating that women tend to prefer more green products than men. According to the previously analyzed data, women are more aware of green products and are more prone to buy

them when available. Men on the other hand, might prioritize other aspects before making a green product purchase. Still, in this research there is not enough evidence to prove the hypotheses yet; therefore further data analysis is required.

Considering how sensitive people are with the prices of regular and green products, participants were asked to share their opinion on whether or not Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products may have higher prices than regular ones. The data indicates that more than 80% of the participants agreed that green products might be priced higher. On the other hand, only ten percent disagreed with green products costing more (See appendix 8.10). These results may imply that green products can be conspicuously purchased since the great majority of participants perceive them as more expensive than regular products. Moreover, it is interesting to identify the positions of men and women towards green products' prices and the profession they exercise. For this reason, a 2-way ANOVA has been executed and the results show that there are not significant differences between any of the variables (gender, profession, and gender and profession).

Table 27: "The prices of Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products may be higher than regular products" significant difference according to gender and profession

| Source | Sig. | R ² |
|--------------------------|-------|----------------|
| Gender | 0,447 | .058 |
| Profession | 0,237 | |
| Gender*Profession | 0,740 | |

With the purpose to gain more inferences about the perception of green products within the participants, they were asked whether green products are affordable to all people or not. The results indicate that participants perceive green products as non-affordable to all people. This indicates that there is certain degree of exclusivity for this type of product. About 70% of the respondents do not think green products are accessible to all people and only approximately 12% think otherwise.

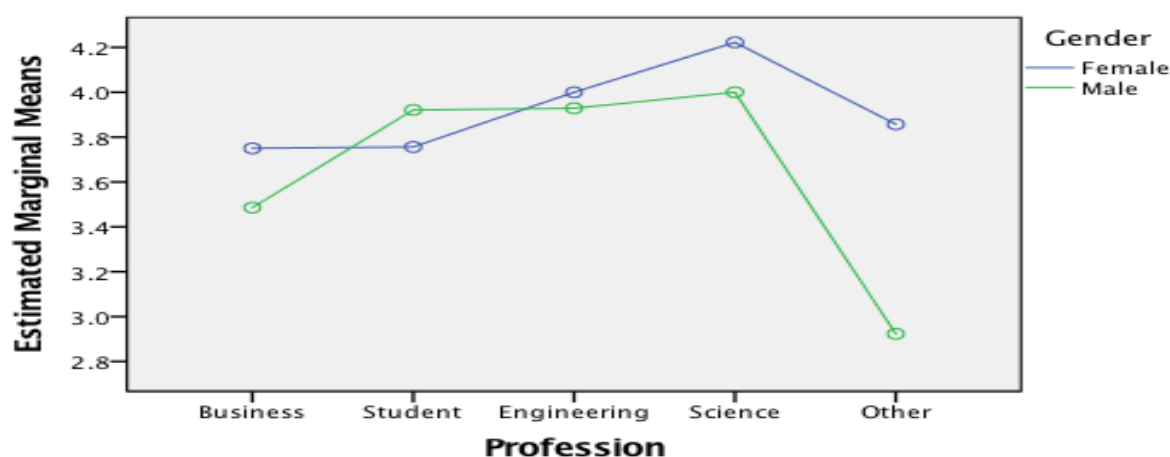


Figure 23: "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products are affordable to all people" according to gender and professions.

After performing an ANOVA to identify possible significant differences between gender and profession of each participant, the results show that there are not statistical difference between genders, professions and gender and professions. The grand majority of respondents perceived that not all people could afford to buy green products. Again, the results are consistent with previous findings. The green consumerism market is a limited market where products are not affordable to all people and could potentially signal a certain degree of financial or social status. However, further analyses needs to be performed in order to test the hypotheses more concretely.

Table 28: “Green/ bio/ eco-friendly products are affordable to all people” significant difference according to gender and profession

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|---------------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .159 | .081 |
| Profession | .054 | |
| Gender * Profession | .112 | |

Even though most of the participants recognized green products as more expensive than regular products and not easily affordable to all people, it is important to analyze their intention toward this type of goods and whether or not they think is worth it to purchase them. For this reason, participants were asked if they were willing to pay more for a product that is environmentally and/or socially friendly. As result, the willingness to pay more for green products was identified with around 49% of participants agreeing to do it. On the other hand, 20% disagreed and 31% had a neutral point of view. Remarkably consistent with previous findings, more women were willing to pay a higher amount for green products than men. There was a significant difference between genders; however, not a significant difference between professions. Nevertheless, women and men from the different working areas had significantly varied opinions.

Being more specific, people who agreed to pay more for green products were mostly willing to pay between 0,1% and 20% higher. This is quite interesting since it demonstrates that there is a tendency to be keen and spend more on products that are marketed as environmentally and/or socially friendly. From the results, it was also clear that there are not significant differences between gender and professions. Nevertheless, there was a higher number of women willing to pay more than men, but some men were willing to pay a slightly higher amount for green products than women; although, by a very insignificant difference.

Table 29: “How much more people are willing to pay for green products” significant difference according to gender and profession

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|---------------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .604 | .082 |
| Profession | .448 | |
| Gender * Profession | .155 | |

This willingness to pay more for green products can be the result of remorse feelings towards the environment or other people suffering the consequences of consumerism. In order to test this assumption, participants were asked whether or not they feel guilty for their living styles and the impact it carries. The results indicate that about 47% of the total participants feel guilty for the way they are living. On the contrary, approximately 27% do not feel this way and 25% have a neutral position. Yet, the results significantly vary between gender and age groups.

Table 30: “You feel guilty because your living style is harmful to the environment or to people living in poor countries” according to gender and age

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | |
|---|-------------|------|----------------|-----|
| Dependent Variable: You feel guilty because your living style is harmful to the environment or to people living in poor countries | | | | |
| Gender | Age | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
| Female | 16 to 20 | 2.94 | .680 | 16 |
| | 21 to 30 | 2.36 | .769 | 74 |
| | 31 to 40 | 2.14 | .363 | 14 |
| | 41 to 50 | 3.50 | 1.732 | 4 |
| | 51 to 60 | 2.17 | .408 | 6 |
| | Total | 2.45 | .799 | 114 |
| Male | 16 to 20 | 3.62 | .650 | 13 |
| | 21 to 30 | 3.11 | 1.048 | 65 |
| | 31 to 40 | 3.06 | 1.392 | 18 |
| | 41 to 50 | 2.86 | 1.215 | 7 |
| | 51 to 60 | 4.00 | .000 | 3 |
| | 61 or older | 3.00 | .000 | 2 |
| | Total | 3.17 | 1.072 | 108 |
| Total | 16 to 20 | 3.24 | .739 | 29 |
| | 21 to 30 | 2.71 | .980 | 139 |
| | 31 to 40 | 2.66 | 1.153 | 32 |
| | 41 to 50 | 3.09 | 1.375 | 11 |
| | 51 to 60 | 2.78 | .972 | 9 |
| | 61 or older | 3.00 | .000 | 2 |
| | Total | 2.80 | 1.006 | 222 |

From the results of an ANOVA, it is observable that there are more women accepting they feel guilty for their living standards than men; especially women aged between 31 and 40 years. On the other hand, men aged between 51 and 60 years do not have any remorse feelings towards the environment or other people due to their living standards.

To continue exploring why people are willing to pay more for green products and to find out about their perceptions on green products, the participants were asked what they think of such goods.

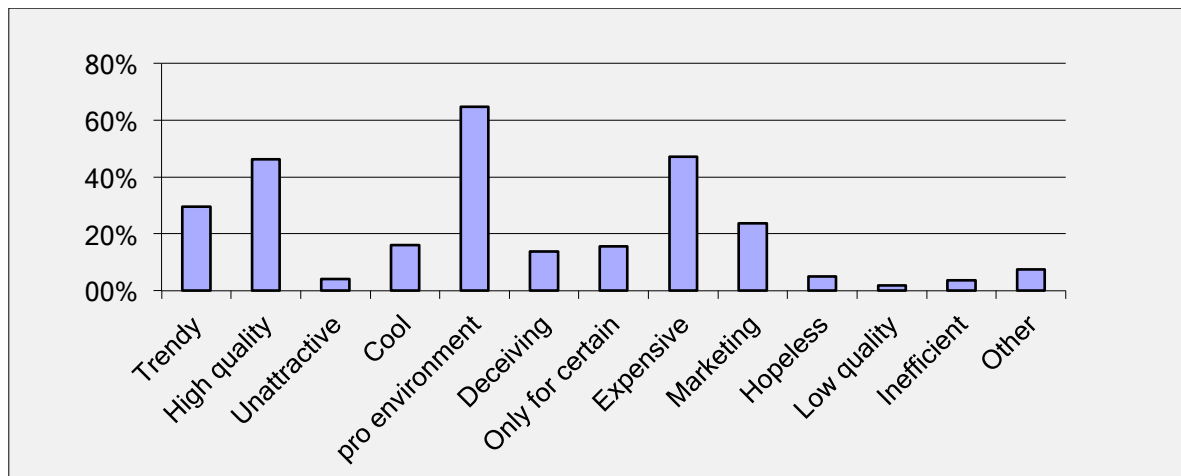


Figure 24: Perception about green products

Most of the participants perceived green products as environmentally friendly with more than 60% votes in this category. Moreover, green products are also perceived among the sample population as goods with high quality, expensive and trendy. On the other hand, these products have a low perception as inefficient, unattractive and with low quality. These results greatly contribute to testing hypotheses 3 and 4 in this research and will be further discussed in the next chapter. It is interesting to see how green products potentially differ from regular products not only environmental wise, but also in financial and social terms.

Thanks to a Mann-Whitney U-test, it is possible to identify the differences between genders across all the categories mentioned above. From the results, significant differences were found between men and women perceiving green products as unattractive, cool, only for certain people and made with low quality. Therefore, these perceptions vary according to personal experiences and backgrounds. In the other categories however, there were not significant differences between genders.

Once the perceptions of participants regarding green products were analyzed, studies considering the feelings involved after purchasing them were also conducted. The results show that the majority of respondents have positive feelings after buying green products. About 50% of participants feel responsible, 49% feel good, 29% feel satisfied, 23% feel motivated, 18% feel confident and 11% feel socially accepted. On the other hand, around 15% feel unchanged (See appendix 8.18). Remarkably, there was a low percentage of people having negative feelings after purchasing green products. This includes 7% feeling silly, and 6% feeling cheated. Just for the sake of curiosity, a Mann-Whitney U-test was also conducted in order to analyze the positions of students and people working in business related areas. According to the results, there is no significant difference between students and professionals working in the business sector regarding feelings and sensations after purchasing green

products. The only difference found was that business professionals felt more motivated than students after buying pro environmental and social products.

This data is very helpful to test the hypotheses previously set stating that green consumerism can signal social status in Austria and generate a feeling of responsibility towards the environment. The results indicate that both hypotheses are correct and green products can be used to differentiate oneself from another because of the perceptions and feelings their consumption generates. The results also suggest that green products are usually perceived as favorable for the environment and may change the impact that consumerism has on nature; positively or negatively. Nevertheless, the study is not quite done yet. In this first half, the potential of green products consumption as social indicators has been revealed; however, the next step is to evaluate whether people use them for this purpose or not. As result, these hypotheses along with the data to be analyzed subsequently, helps in providing an accurate answer to the research question.

For this purpose, it is important to identify the behavior of participants towards other people after purchasing green products and what their thoughts are on people who also buy such goods. According to the responses, approximately 42% of the participants have told other people when they have purchased green products at least once during the last year. Another 33% have not shared when they purchased such products and 25% have a neutral position regarding telling others about their green purchasing behavior (See appendix 8.20). These results vary significantly according to the age of participants. In fact, more than 30% of participants agreed that other people know about their green purchasing behavior. On the other hand, 39% disagreed and another 31% is not sure whether or not other people have noticed their behavior towards green products.

Table 31: Other people know about your Green/Bio/Eco-Friendly purchasing behavior

| Other people know about your Green/Bio/Eco-friendly purchasing behavior | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Strongly Agree | 3,6% | 8 |
| Agree | 26,5% | 59 |
| Neutral | 30,9% | 69 |
| Disagree | 29,6% | 66 |
| Strongly Disagree | 9,4% | 21 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 223 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 0 |

Moreover, to evaluate the attitude of participants regarding social differentiation through green consumption, respondents were asked if they like telling others when green products are purchased. The data reflects that 22% of participants like telling others when they have purchased green products. On the contrary, 39% do not like that and another 39% share a neutral position. More specifically and according to the results from a 2-way ANOVA, women have tendencies to like commenting to others about the green products they buy, especially women aged between 31 to 40

years and 51 to 60 years. 16% of the variation in people enjoying commenting others about their green purchase can be explained by the variability in their gender.

Table 32: "You like commenting to other people when you buy Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products" significant difference according to gender and age

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|--------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .002 | .160 |
| Age | .198 | |
| Gender * Age | .264 | |

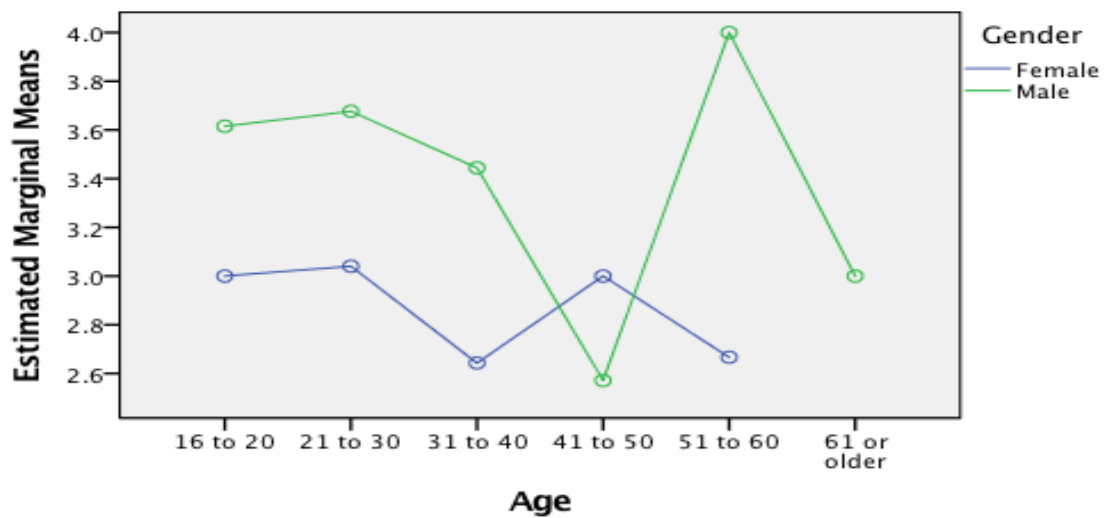


Figure 25: You like commenting to other people when you buy Green/Bio/Eco-friendly according to gender and age

The data analyzed reveals that eco labels and/or bio certificates are mostly important in food products, beverages, electronics and clothing. Nevertheless, Green/Bio/Eco-friendly certifications are also important in products such as furniture, cosmetics, cleaning products, transportation, and accommodation services. Additionally, a Mann-Whitney U-test revealed that there are not significant differences between genders and the results reflect similar patterns for men and women.

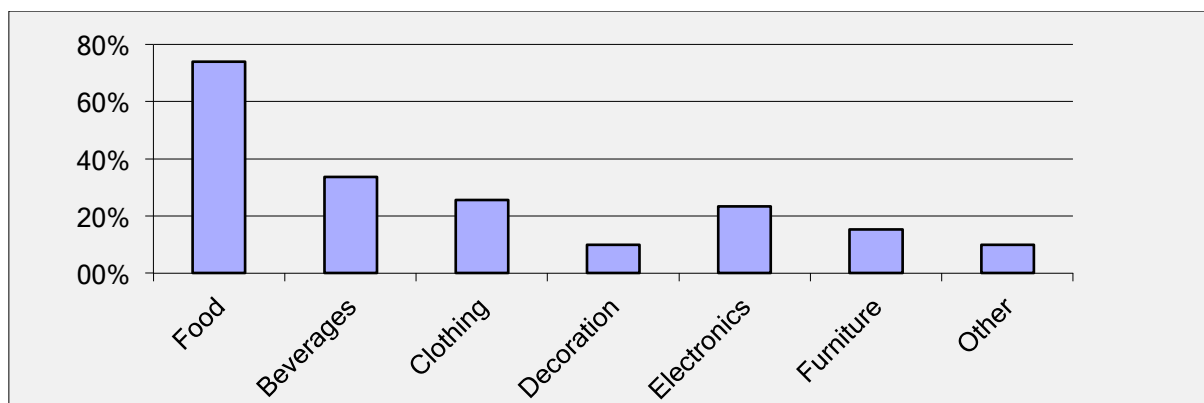


Figure 26: Importance of Green/Bio/Eco-friendly certificates according to products

Even though a significant percentage of participants stated that others do not know about their green consumerism patterns or are not sure if others are aware of it, food products are among the items that respondents are most known for buying Green/Bio/Eco-friendly certified.

Changing the perspective, it is noteworthy to comment on the thoughts of participants about other people who purchase Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products. According to the results, it is clear that green consumers are considered to be caring for the environment, socially responsible, and interestingly enough, financially stable. Most of the participants think positively about people buying green products, however, some of them see green consumers as pretentious, naive and strange.

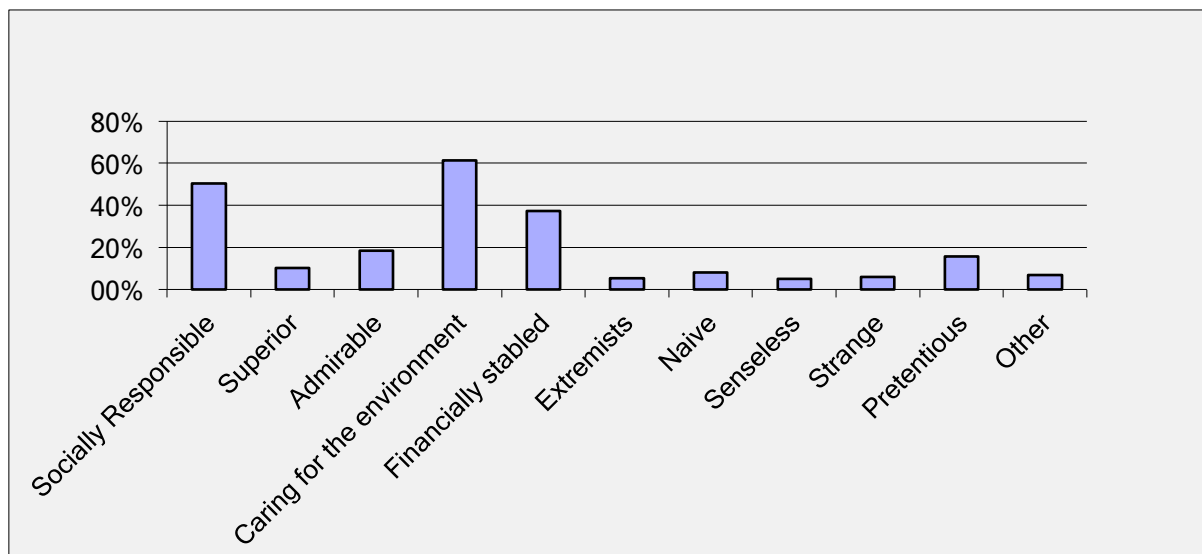


Figure 27: What do you think of people who purchase Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products

The population size in this study is relatively small in comparison with the whole population of Austria. With the purpose of analyzing the behavior of more people, participants were asked if other consumers have told them when they have purchased green products. According to the results shown in the figure below, more than half of participants have heard about other people buying green products. On the other hand, approximately 14% have not and 29% do not remember or are not sure about it.

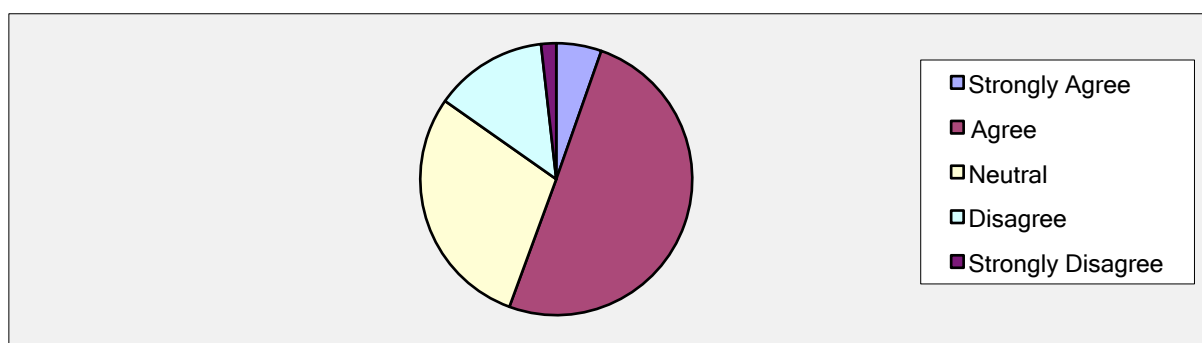


Figure 28: Other people have told you when they have purchased Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products

It is noticeable that the majority of participants have been told when other people buy green products. Nevertheless, the responses vary according to gender. Among the female population these comments are more frequent than among the male population. So far, females have tendencies to behave differently than men regarding green consumer behavior. However, it is not only important to discover that other people share when they buy green products, but also to analyze what the reactions of the participants are when they have been told about it. Contestants were asked if they felt pressure to buy green products when they knew about a colleague buying them. 29% of the sample population agreed they felt pressured to follow suit while more than half of the responses were negative in this aspect. Again this time women showed a higher propensity to buy green products after friends or colleague bought them. This is consistent with the previous results where women are clearly more affected than men in green consumption related matters.

The last set of questions in the survey aimed at identifying what type of products participants buy thinking about the reaction of other people and whether or not they fear others could think of them as non-bio/eco-friendly consumers. The results show again that food products are among the most important products regarding social and environmental implications as well as clothing and electronic products. On the other hand, 17% of participants do not care about the reaction of other people and did not list any product.

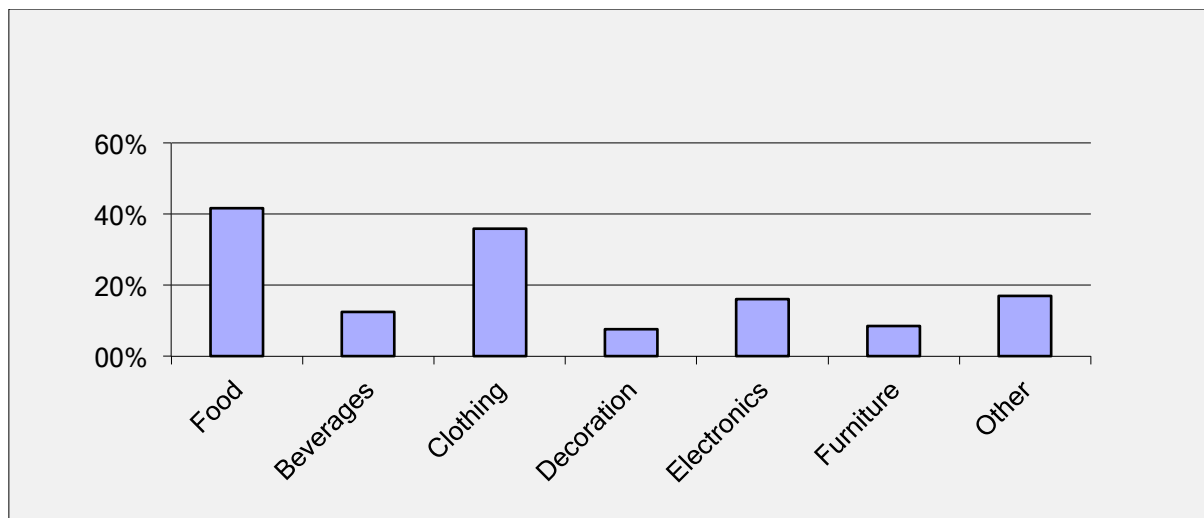


Figure 29: Products where people think about the reaction of others

Lastly, based on the results, the majority of participants do not care about being recognized as people who do not buy green products. Only 7% of the total sample population agreed they would not like to be tagged as a person who does not buy eco-friendly goods. Though the majority of participants denied being worried about that, there are significant variations between genders and also between age groups. 19.6% of this variations can be explained by the variability of one's gender and age.

Table 33: "You fear other people could think of you as a person who does not buy Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product" significant difference according to gender and age

| Source | P-Value | R ² |
|--------------|---------|----------------|
| Gender | .014 | .196 |
| Age | .001 | |
| Gender * Age | .018 | |

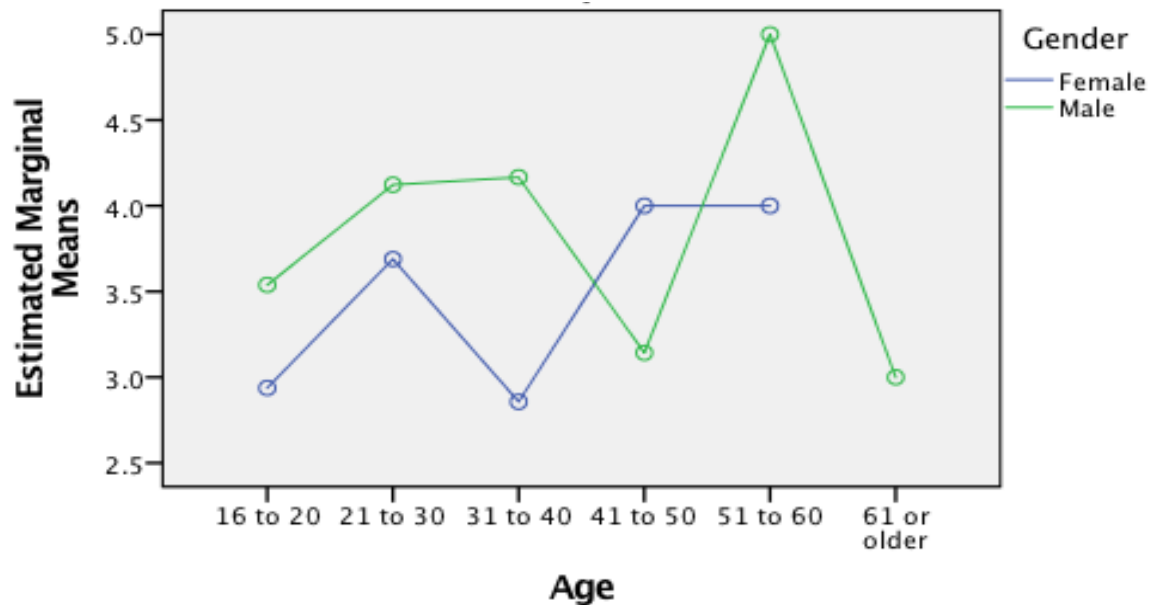


Figure 30: You fear other people could think of you as a person who does not buy Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product according to gender and age

As illustrated in the figure above, there are not positive estimated means, but men have a more negative position regarding having fear for being cataloged as non-eco-friendly consumers. Men show less interest in this aspect, which is consistent with previous results throughout the whole analysis. On the other hand, women are showing more interest about green consumerism; but also are more prone to green conspicuous consumption.

The above-analyzed data was gathered from the surveys distributed to the participants, which include people from different genders, professions, age and other characteristics. In total, 41 questions were individually examined and the results helped tremendously to test the set hypotheses and gain inferences to answer the research question. While the data interpreted above can be utilized to derive several conclusions, the different hypotheses proposed in this paper were proved correct. This leads to the formulation of the final answer of the research question.

The results reflect that people who participated in the research tend to prefer buying green products more than regular products when available. The influence of Green/Bio/Eco-friendly labels on the products is very significant on the participants' ultimate purchasing decision because they may

perceive them as synonyms of trust and quality. These results do not imply that participants more frequently buy green products than regular products, but at least show that important consideration is given to green products before the actual purchase.

Additionally, it was established that people could potentially consume green products conspicuously. The feelings after purchasing green products and the perception they generate on other people can easily be translated into social differentiation. These green consumerism patterns are not necessarily associated with being concerned for the environment. Whether the reasons to buy green products are a legitimate environmental concern or not is hard to say based on the data analyzed above, but there are certainly other factors that influence this type of behavior.

4.6. Summary

Even though green products may facilitate social differentiation within a population, this does not mean the population in Austria implements these types of actions to signal social status. However, there are green conspicuous consumption patterns in Austria according to the results. This behavior is not very common though. Only a low percentage of participants behave in such a way, yet it varies depending on gender, age, education and professions. Based on this research, one cannot affirm this is a constant behavior, but there are certainly cases where people have used green products to show they can afford them or to be part of the bio/healthy trend. The next chapter analyzes the findings in this section more deeply and compares whether these results are consistent with some theories set before regarding green consumption and conspicuous consumption.

5. Discussion

In this section, the data analyzed will be used as a reference in order to compare the results with the literature and existing theories revolving around the research question. Different aspects from the sample population were taken into account for the analysis and interesting results were obtained. It is clear that the green consumerism market has increased significantly in the last decade in Austria. Nowadays, green products are accessible anywhere in the country and Green/Bio/Eco-friendly labels can be found on about any type of products.

In current society, people associate consumption with social welfare because it serves as an indicator of success and personal preferences. Simultaneously, levels of consumption have increased dramatically worldwide, especially in developed countries, and have reduced the possibilities of achieving a sustainable lifestyle. As result, hard work on shifting social paradigms and economic systems is required in order to mitigate environmental impacts and effectively reduce consumption levels. The emergency to reduce the levels of consumption are highly acknowledged in theory, but unfortunately in the real world there are inefficient measures to achieve this goal. More emphasis should be applied on new strategies aimed to change the present habits of high consumerism and promote less materialistic mentalities. Many of the current strategies are concentrated on increasing production efficiency, but the problem also lays in the current economic system where economic growth is the final objective of all nations. Economic growth is measured by GDP, an indicator that requires production and consumption to increase, and for that reason current environmental strategies are not sufficient to achieve sustainability. There must be cooperation between the different stakeholders to promote shifts in consumption patterns and mitigate the environmental impacts. However, this process requires high moral values and commitment, which is sometimes in conflict with current political and economic agendas.

Regarding green consumerism, there are different definitions and understanding that people have about this concept. Although green consumption may mitigate some of the harmful effects on the environment, it can also cause the contrary outcome when there is overconsumption. Consumers see this practice as a pro-environmental activity, but generally do not know what level of consumption is adequate, or how to effectively exercise it. Moreover, it is necessary to reduce the rate of economic growth; some authors argue that even degrowth strategies are needed to avoid further environmental degradation. Therefore, GDP as a measure of social welfare is not a suitable index because it does not take into account environment degradation, and many other aspects important for the determination of social and financial welfare.

Consumption patterns are triggered by a variety of psychological, social and economic factors; consequently, a multidisciplinary methodology is key for identifying current consumerism matters. This study suggests that the relation between conspicuous consumption and green consumption is not ubiquitous in Austria; however, green consumption creates a feeling of security, stability,

responsibility, and social integration that can be easily translated into social differentiation factors. Nevertheless, the sample in this study shows a rather low percentage of people consuming green products for conspicuous reasons.

During the analysis, there were definitely some cases of conspicuous consumption. Especially in the female population, buying products and telling others about it was a somewhat frequent behavior. However, participants showed a quite different comportment when it comes to green consumption. According to the results of this study, conspicuous consumption is an aspect of green consumerism in Austria. Although this behavior is not frequent in all Austrian residents, there are green conspicuous consumption patterns. This conduct does not mean people are attracted to products having such certificates in order to differentiate themselves from others, but nevertheless the study showed a preference for green products and a good perception of people who buy them.

In the case of people who purchase products with Green/Bio/Eco-friendly labels to engage in conspicuous behavior, there may be two reasons for doing it: to indicate social status or to motivate other people to follow suit and be more concerned with the environment. In either case, the effectiveness of green marketing tools such as green labels is quite effective attracting new customers and selling more products. Green products are in a way less harmful to the environment; however, if there is overconsumption the aggregate impact is the same as conventional products.

Nevertheless, green consumption patterns in Austria vary according to different aspects. Factors such as gender, profession, age, education or location potentially influence the behavior towards green products. The study suggests that when buying new products, environmental and social concerns are not decisive in the purchasing process. Other aspects such as quality, low prices, health and convenience are given priority in most cases. This may be the reason why there is also a high percentage of responses indicating non-awareness about green products. Interestingly, female respondents have slightly more consideration with the environment and are usually more aware of green products. Yet, there are many cases where people buy green products without being conscious about it. This can be the result of the growing popularity of green products and their expansion in the Austrian market and shelf space.

Being aware of green products does not necessarily mean people buy them consciously. In the study, it was observed that a quarter of all participants do not buy such products intentionally. Therefore, there are also cases where consumers are aware of green products, but prefer to evade them. This is because of the negative perceptions associated with green consumerism as well. Even though green products are mostly perceived positively, some people in this study linked them with deceiving practices and other negative aspects. Nevertheless, the correlation between people aware of green products and people buying green products is highly positive, but the level of guiltiness towards the environment after such purchase change significantly. The study shows that most of the participants do not evaluate the impact of their actions on the environment and this is consistent with previous results where environmental and social concerns are not a priority in the purchasing process.

However, this reflects that there are potential opportunities to change this behavior because consumers engage in such consumption patterns due to their unawareness of the environmental and social effects.

The reason for such consumption patterns, in a way, can be related to green marketing strategies. Green labels are usually thought of as pro-environmental or social products, but they are not informative enough. There are cases where the energy consumption of an electronic item is very low and that makes it eligible for an energy consumption certification. On the other hand, there is not information about how the product was manufactured or the working conditions of the manufacturing plant. These are aspects that would drastically change the purchasing behavior of consumers if the information were more easily accessible. Green certificates can create positive feelings for consumers and make them believe their behavior is responsible (as the results from this study suggest), but there is more valuable information that is ignored and should be equally displayed.

Still, due to the positive perception and the characteristics that green products are associated with, in Austria there are some consumers who purchase them in a conspicuous manner. In previous studies, green consumption has been related to conspicuous consumption very frequently, however, in the research sample this behavior is not very common. According to the results, many people consume green products, but do not usually use them to differentiate themselves from other social groups. There are many reasons why respondents may have associated the consumption of green products with a positive behavior; for example, most of the participants think green products have better quality than conventional products. This is an aspect that has changed over the last few years because it used to be the other way around. There is a higher level of trust revolving around green products because of the fact that they have some sort of certification. As another example, food products containing green labels can be seen as food that is not genetically modified or contain chemicals harmful for the human being. Consistent with the results in this study, health is one of the most important aspects taken into account when buying new products; therefore, products with such labels are more attractive to the consumer.

Again, the overall positive perception of green products may have consequences as well. As mentioned in the literature, people tend to limit themselves to consume green products and do not make extra efforts for substantial contributions towards the environment and society. Green consumption increases the overall aggregate environmental impact and do not properly address the problem of overconsumption. Therefore, other strategies must be in place and cooperation between the different shareholders is critical to overcome potential issues arising due to environmental and social degradation.

6. Conclusions

The methods, tools and techniques used for this study were effective to answer the research question. The research methodology applied in this research study yielded authentic and reliable information helpful to solve the main query of this project. The data used in the study has been gathered through primary and secondary data collection methods in which survey questionnaires were prepared and distributed to 223 people in Austria to investigate the relationship between conspicuous consumption and green consumption along with the effect of green marketing strategies on consumers' behavior. Furthermore, ethical considerations were highly important and included during the whole study process. Certain limitations were realized during the course of this research, but with the implementation of different strategies the margin of errors was reduced. Overall, the whole methodology and its techniques played a significant role to provide a proper direction to the research towards its successful completion.

From the result of this research, it can be concluded that green conspicuous consumption is an aspect of green consumerism and is among the key processes of the business environment, which has social, economic and environmental implications. With an increase in awareness about the environmental influences of consumption, consumers are focusing on the purchase of environmentally friendly products. The prospects of green consumerism depict the characteristics of consumers for green products, their purchase behavior, and environmental attitudes. There are various motivational factors that contribute towards green purchase behavior among the people, which are EC, PCE, self-identity, self-efficacy, collectivism, gender type, environmental knowledge, environmental affect, and peer influence. These factors transform the perception and attitude of consumers towards green products and services and contribute towards the lessening of environmental impact. These aspects provide significant opportunities to the marketers for the integration of green marketing philosophies within the business operations to promote the usability of green purchase behavior among the target consumers. However, Green consumerism can generate negative effects in the environment as well. When over-consumed, the aggregate impact of green products on the environment increases and the only benefit is economical.

Green products potentially facilitate social differentiation within a population and there are people in Austria who engage in green conspicuous consumption to signal high social status. This behavior is not very common though. Only a low percentage of participants behave in such a way, yet it varies depending on gender, age, education and professions. Based on this research, one cannot affirm this is a constant behavior, but there are certainly cases where people have used green products to show they can afford them or to be part of the bio/healthy trend. Moreover, the impact of green marketing tools such as Green/Bio/Eco-friendly certificates on consumers is very high.

Conspicuous green consumption has a short-term positive impact, but an overall negative impact. A short-term benefit exists because it can induce other people to consume green products in order to

obtain any social perception related to it and indirectly reduces the consumption of conventional products. On the contrary, since its consumption would not primarily be due to environmental or social concerns, priority is given to conspicuousness; therefore, overconsumption is highly plausible.

The Austrian green market has increased significantly over the last decade and green products are becoming more popular every time. This paper has proved the existence of green conspicuous consumption in the Austrian society, but there is a lot of potential for further research regarding this matter. It is interesting to investigate in greater detail how green products, which are made to reduce environmental and social impacts, can actually cause the opposite effect. Another aspect would be: what if people were more informed about manufacturing processes and not only positive information was to be displayed. There are definitely many dimensions regarding green consumption and conspicuous consumption that are interesting and would contribute greatly to the development of a sustainable future.

7. Works Cited

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8. Appendices

8.1. Appendix: Custom Tables “Gender and Education”

| | | Education | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|--------|------------------------------|---------|--|---------|----------------------------|---------|------------------|---------|-----------------|---------|----------|---------|
| | | Less than high school degree | | High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED) | | Some college but no degree | | Associate degree | | Bachelor degree | | Graduate | |
| | | Count | Row N % | Count | Row N % | Count | Row N % | Count | Row N % | Count | Row N % | Count | Row N % |
| Gender | Female | 0 | 0.0% | 23 | 20.2% | 11 | 9.6% | 0 | 0.0% | 50 | 43.9% | 30 | 26.3% |
| | Male | 3 | 2.8% | 8 | 7.4% | 9 | 8.3% | 9 | 8.3% | 52 | 48.1% | 27 | 25.0% |

8.2. Appendix: Custom Tables “Professionally Involved in Environmental protection or Sustainability”

| | | Count | Column N % |
|---|-----|-------|------------|
| Are you professionally involved in environmental protection or sustainable development? | Yes | 52 | 23.4% |
| | No | 170 | 76.6% |

8.3. Appendix: 2-Way ANOVA “The last time you went shopping, did you consider the effect on the environment and society before purchasing the product?” According to Gender and Profession

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: The last time you went shopping, did you consider the effect on the environment and society before purchasing the product?

| Gender | Profession | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|--------|------------------------------------|------|----------------|-----|
| Female | Business/Management/Administration | 2.96 | .922 | 48 |
| | Student | 2.76 | .860 | 41 |
| | Engineering | 1.00 | .000 | 2 |
| | Science | 3.22 | .972 | 9 |
| | Other | 2.57 | .646 | 14 |
| | Total | 2.82 | .905 | 114 |
| Male | Business/Management/Administration | 2.86 | 1.004 | 35 |
| | Student | 3.39 | 1.264 | 38 |
| | Engineering | 3.07 | .475 | 14 |
| | Science | 1.88 | .991 | 8 |
| | Other | 2.62 | .506 | 13 |
| | Total | 2.97 | 1.080 | 108 |
| Total | Business/Management/Administration | 2.92 | .953 | 83 |
| | Student | 3.06 | 1.113 | 79 |
| | Engineering | 2.81 | .834 | 16 |
| | Science | 2.59 | 1.176 | 17 |
| | Other | 2.59 | .572 | 27 |
| | Total | 2.90 | .995 | 222 |

8.4. Appendix: 2-Way ANOVA “You base your purchasing decisions on Eco Labels or bio certificates if available” according to gender and profession

Dependent Variable: You base your purchasing decisions on Eco Labels or bio certificates if available

| Gender Profession | | Mean | Std. Error | 95% Confidence Interval | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|-------|------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| Female | Business/Management/Administration | 2.562 | .121 | 2.324 | 2.801 |
| | Student | 2.537 | .131 | 2.278 | 2.795 |
| | Engineering | 1.000 | .593 | -.169 | 2.169 |
| | Science | 2.111 | .280 | 1.560 | 2.662 |
| | Other | 2.786 | .224 | 2.344 | 3.227 |
| Male | Business/Management/Administration | 3.029 | .142 | 2.749 | 3.308 |
| | Student | 3.763 | .136 | 3.495 | 4.031 |
| | Engineering | 3.286 | .224 | 2.844 | 3.727 |
| | Science | 2.375 | .296 | 1.791 | 2.959 |
| | Other | 2.462 | .233 | 2.003 | 2.920 |

8.5. Appendix: Custom Tables “When you see a product for the first time and you really like it, you buy it immediately/ as soon as possible”

| | | Count | Column N % |
|---|-------------------|-------|------------|
| When you see a product for the first time and you really like it, you buy it immediately/ as soon as possible | Strongly Agree | 10 | 4.5% |
| | Agree | 99 | 44.4% |
| | Neutral | 59 | 26.5% |
| | Disagree | 48 | 21.5% |
| | Strongly Disagree | 7 | 3.1% |

8.6. Appendix: Custom Tables “The last time you bought a significant product, you anticipated talking to others about it - mentioning green/environmental/bio issues”

| | | Count | Column N % |
|--|-------------------|-------|------------|
| The last time you bought a significant product, you anticipated talking to others about it - mentioning green/environmental/bio issues | Strongly Agree | 6 | 2.7% |
| | Agree | 51 | 22.9% |
| | Neutral | 86 | 38.6% |
| | Disagree | 68 | 30.5% |
| | Strongly Disagree | 12 | 5.4% |

8.7. Appendix: Custom Tables “You prefer to buy products that most of the other people also buy”

| | | Count | Column N % |
|---|-------------------|-------|------------|
| You prefer to buy products that most of the other people also buy | Strongly Agree | 3 | 1.3% |
| | Agree | 53 | 23.8% |
| | Neutral | 68 | 30.5% |
| | Disagree | 76 | 34.1% |
| | Strongly Disagree | 23 | 10.3% |

8.8. Appendix: Custom Tables “You have bought a regular product over a "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product" because of its better quality”

| | | Count | Column N % |
|--|-------------------|-------|------------|
| You have bought a regular product over a "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product" because of its better quality. | Strongly Agree | 23 | 10.3% |
| | Agree | 77 | 34.5% |
| | Neutral | 72 | 32.3% |
| | Disagree | 34 | 15.2% |
| | Strongly Disagree | 17 | 7.6% |

8.9. Appendix: Custom Tables “What type of product was this?”

| | | Count | Column N % |
|--|----------------|-------|------------|
| What type of product was this? (i.e. Electronics, food, beverage, transportation etc.) | Food | 80 | 57.1% |
| | Beverages | 15 | 10.7% |
| | Transportation | 11 | 7.9% |
| | Electronics | 18 | 12.9% |
| | Cosmetics | 8 | 5.7% |
| | Household | 5 | 3.6% |
| | Other | 3 | 2.1% |

8.10. Appendix: Custom Tables “The prices of "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products" may be higher than regular products”

| | | Count | Column N % |
|---|-------------------|-------|------------|
| The prices of "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products" may be higher than regular products | Strongly Agree | 61 | 27.4% |
| | Agree | 128 | 57.4% |
| | Neutral | 11 | 4.9% |
| | Disagree | 18 | 8.1% |
| | Strongly Disagree | 5 | 2.2% |

8.11. Appendix: Custom Tables “Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products are affordable to all people”

| | | Count | Column N % |
|--|-------------------|-------|------------|
| "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products" are affordable to all people | Strongly Agree | 3 | 1.3% |
| | Agree | 25 | 11.2% |
| | Neutral | 40 | 17.9% |
| | Disagree | 114 | 51.1% |
| | Strongly Disagree | 41 | 18.4% |

8.12. Appendix: Custom Tables “You are willing to pay more for a product that is environmentally and socially friendly”

| | | Count | Column N % |
|---|-------------------|-------|------------|
| You are willing to pay more for a product that is environmentally and socially friendly | Strongly Agree | 13 | 5.8% |
| | Agree | 97 | 43.5% |
| | Neutral | 68 | 30.5% |
| | Disagree | 39 | 17.5% |
| | Strongly Disagree | 6 | 2.7% |

8.13. Appendix: 2-Way ANOVA “You are willing to pay more for a product that is environmentally and socially friendly” According to Gender and Profession

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: You are willing to pay more for a product that is environmentally and socially friendly

| Gender | Profession | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|--------|------------------------------------|------|----------------|-----|
| Female | Business/Management/Administration | 2.50 | .945 | 48 |
| | Student | 2.56 | .976 | 41 |
| | Engineering | 2.00 | .000 | 2 |
| | Science | 2.44 | .527 | 9 |
| | Other | 2.64 | .745 | 14 |
| | Total | 2.53 | .895 | 114 |
| Male | Business/Management/Administration | 2.86 | .845 | 35 |
| | Student | 3.05 | .868 | 38 |
| | Engineering | 2.93 | .997 | 14 |
| | Science | 2.88 | 1.246 | 8 |
| | Other | 2.08 | .760 | 13 |
| | Total | 2.84 | .929 | 108 |
| Total | Business/Management/Administration | 2.65 | .916 | 83 |
| | Student | 2.80 | .952 | 79 |
| | Engineering | 2.81 | .981 | 16 |
| | Science | 2.65 | .931 | 17 |
| | Other | 2.37 | .792 | 27 |
| | Total | 2.68 | .923 | 222 |

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: You are willing to pay more for a product that is environmentally and socially friendly

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----|-------------|---------|------|
| Corrected Model | 15.852 ^a | 9 | 1.761 | 2.165 | .026 |
| Intercept | 637.128 | 1 | 637.128 | 783.288 | .000 |
| Gender | 2.553 | 1 | 2.553 | 3.139 | .078 |
| Profession | 4.362 | 4 | 1.091 | 1.341 | .256 |
| Gender * Profession | 6.598 | 4 | 1.649 | 2.028 | .092 |
| Error | 172.441 | 212 | .813 | | |
| Total | 1783.000 | 222 | | | |
| Corrected Total | 188.293 | 221 | | | |

a. R Squared = .084 (Adjusted R Squared = .045)

8.14. Appendix: Custom Tables “If yes, How much more?”

| | Count | Column N % |
|----------------------------|-------|------------|
| If yes, How much more? <5% | 57 | 32.6% |
| 5%-10% | 67 | 38.3% |
| 10%-20% | 36 | 20.6% |
| 20%-30% | 12 | 6.9% |
| 30%< | 3 | 1.7% |

8.15. Appendix: Custom Tables "You feel guilty because your living style is harmful to the environment or to people living in poor countries"

| | | Count | Column N % |
|---|-------------------|-------|------------|
| You feel guilty because your living style is harmful to the environment or to people living in poor countries | Strongly Agree | 11 | 4.9% |
| | Agree | 95 | 42.6% |
| | Neutral | 56 | 25.1% |
| | Disagree | 50 | 22.4% |
| | Strongly Disagree | 11 | 4.9% |

8.16. Appendix: 2-Way ANOVA "You feel guilty because your living style is harmful to the environment or to people living in poor countries"

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: You feel guilty because your living style is harmful to the environment or to people living in poor countries

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|-------------------------|----|-------------|--------|------|
| Gender | 10.451 | 1 | 10.451 | 12.336 | .001 |
| Age | 10.397 | 5 | 2.079 | 2.455 | .035 |
| Gender * Age | 7.519 | 4 | 1.880 | 2.219 | .068 |

a. R Squared = .202 (Adjusted R Squared = .164)

8.17. Appendix: Mann-Whitney U-test "You think of "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products as" According to Gender

Test Statistics^a

| | Trendy | High quality | Unattractive | Cool | Pro environment | Deceiving | Only for certain people | Expensive | Marketing | Hopeless | Low quality | Inefficient | Other |
|------------------------|----------|--------------|--------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| Mann-Whitney U | 5613.000 | 6033.000 | 5670.000 | 5436.000 | 5829.000 | 5925.000 | 5493.000 | 5592.000 | 5736.000 | 6117.000 | 5940.000 | 6057.000 | 6015.000 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | .152 | .766 | .003 | .018 | .408 | .421 | .028 | .173 | .234 | .828 | .050 | .521 | .522 |

8.18. Appendix: Custom Tables “When you buy a Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product you feel”

| | | Count | Column N % |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------|------------|
| Responsible | 0 | 113 | 50.7% |
| | Responsible | 110 | 49.3% |
| Motivated | 0 | 172 | 77.1% |
| | Motivated | 51 | 22.9% |
| Good | 0 | 123 | 55.2% |
| | Good | 100 | 44.8% |
| Socially Accepted | 0 | 198 | 88.8% |
| | Socially Accepted | 25 | 11.2% |
| Satisfied | 0 | 159 | 71.3% |
| | Satisfied | 64 | 28.7% |
| Confident | 0 | 184 | 82.5% |
| | Confident | 39 | 17.5% |
| Unchanged | 0 | 189 | 84.8% |
| | Unchanged | 34 | 15.2% |
| Silly | 0 | 208 | 93.3% |
| | Silly | 15 | 6.7% |
| Embarrassed | 0 | 219 | 98.2% |
| | Embarrassed | 4 | 1.8% |
| Cheated | 0 | 210 | 94.2% |
| | Cheated | 13 | 5.8% |
| Other | 0 | 222 | 99.6% |
| | Other | 1 | 0.4% |

8.19. Appendix: Mann-Whitney U-test “When you buy a Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product you feel” According to Professions (students and business professionals)

Test Statistics^a

| | Responsible | Motivated | Good | Socially Accepted | Satisfied | Confident | Unchanged | Silly | Embarrassed | Cheated | Other |
|------------------------|-------------|-----------|----------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------|----------|----------|
| Mann-Whitney U | 3005.500 | 2871.500 | 2961.000 | 3137.500 | 3297.500 | 2985.000 | 3209.000 | 3268.500 | 3318.000 | 3271.000 | 3318.000 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | .230 | .035 | .169 | .217 | .932 | .086 | .541 | .640 | 1.000 | .601 | 1.000 |

a. Grouping Variable: Profession

8.20. Appendix: Custom Tables “During the last year, you have told other people when you purchased a Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product (at least once)”

| | | Count | Column N % |
|--|-------------------|-------|------------|
| During the last year, you have told other people when you purchased a "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product" (at least once) | Strongly Agree | 16 | 7.2% |
| | Agree | 77 | 34.5% |
| | Neutral | 55 | 24.7% |
| | Disagree | 57 | 25.6% |
| | Strongly Disagree | 18 | 8.1% |

8.21. Appendix: 2-Way ANOVA “During the last year, you have told other people when you purchased a Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product (at least once)” According to Gender and Age

Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: During the last year, you have told other people when you purchased a "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product" (at least once)

| Gender | Age | Mean | Std. Deviation | N |
|--------|-------------|------|----------------|-----|
| Female | 16 to 20 | 2.81 | .750 | 16 |
| | 21 to 30 | 2.95 | 1.071 | 74 |
| | 31 to 40 | 2.50 | .650 | 14 |
| | 41 to 50 | 2.50 | 1.732 | 4 |
| | 51 to 60 | 2.00 | .000 | 6 |
| | Total | 2.81 | 1.003 | 114 |
| Male | 16 to 20 | 2.08 | 1.256 | 13 |
| | 21 to 30 | 3.17 | 1.140 | 65 |
| | 31 to 40 | 3.56 | 1.042 | 18 |
| | 41 to 50 | 2.14 | .900 | 7 |
| | 51 to 60 | 4.00 | .000 | 3 |
| | 61 or older | 3.00 | .000 | 2 |
| | Total | 3.06 | 1.191 | 108 |
| Total | 16 to 20 | 2.48 | 1.056 | 29 |
| | 21 to 30 | 3.05 | 1.105 | 139 |
| | 31 to 40 | 3.09 | 1.027 | 32 |
| | 41 to 50 | 2.27 | 1.191 | 11 |
| | 51 to 60 | 2.67 | 1.000 | 9 |
| | 61 or older | 3.00 | .000 | 2 |
| | Total | 2.93 | 1.103 | 222 |

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: During the last year, you have told other people when you purchased a "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product" (at least once)

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|-------------------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Gender | 4.022 | 1 | 4.022 | 3.657 | .057 |
| Age | 13.146 | 5 | 2.629 | 2.390 | .039 |
| Gender * Age | 19.164 | 4 | 4.791 | 4.356 | .002 |

a. R Squared = .137 (Adjusted R Squared = .096)

8.22. Appendix: Custom Tables “Other people know about your "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly" purchasing behavior”

| | Count | Column N % |
|--|-------|------------|
| Other people know about your "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly" purchasing behaviour | 8 | 3.6% |
| Strongly Agree | 59 | 26.5% |
| Agree | 69 | 30.9% |
| Neutral | 66 | 29.6% |
| Disagree | 21 | 9.4% |
| Strongly Disagree | | |

8.23. Appendix: Custom Tables “You like commenting to other people when you buy "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products”

| | Count | Column N % |
|--|-------|------------|
| You like commenting to other people when you buy "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products" | 2 | 0.9% |
| Strongly Agree | 48 | 21.5% |
| Agree | 87 | 39.0% |
| Neutral | 64 | 28.7% |
| Disagree | 22 | 9.9% |
| Strongly Disagree | | |

8.24. Appendix: Mann-Whitney U-test ""Eco labels or bio certificates are especially important to you when buying" According to Gender

| Test Statistics ^a | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| | Food | Beverages | Clothing | Decoration | Electronics | Furniture | Other |
| Mann-Whitney U | 5742.000 | 6102.000 | 5853.000 | 6078.000 | 5901.000 | 5985.000 | 6012.000 |
| Z | -1.144 | -.138 | -.837 | -.315 | -.727 | -.573 | -.582 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | .253 | .890 | .402 | .753 | .467 | .567 | .561 |

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

8.25. Appendix: Custom Tables "People outside my household know my eco-friendly buying behavior, especially when buying"

| | | Count | Column N % |
|------------------|------------------|-------|------------|
| Food | 0 | 103 | 46.2% |
| | Food | 120 | 53.8% |
| Beverages | 0 | 182 | 81.6% |
| | Beverages | 41 | 18.4% |
| Clothing | 0 | 189 | 84.8% |
| | Clothing | 34 | 15.2% |
| Decoration | 0 | 213 | 95.5% |
| | Decoration | 10 | 4.5% |
| Electronics | 0 | 199 | 89.2% |
| | Electronics | 24 | 10.8% |
| Furniture | 0 | 205 | 91.9% |
| | Furniture | 18 | 8.1% |
| They do not know | 0 | 166 | 74.4% |
| | They do not know | 57 | 25.6% |

8.26. Appendix: Mann-Whitney U-test "Other people have told you when they have purchased Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products"

| Test Statistics ^a | |
|------------------------------|---|
| | Other people have told you when they have purchased "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products" |
| Mann-Whitney U | 5290.000 |
| Z | -1.970 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | .049 |

8.27. Appendix: Custom Tables "The last time you saw or knew about a colleague buying Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products, you felt pressure to do it as well"

| | | Count | Column N % |
|--|-------------------|-------|------------|
| The last time you saw or knew about a colleague buying "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products", you felt pressure to do it as well | Strongly Agree | 3 | 1.3% |
| | Agree | 62 | 27.8% |
| | Neutral | 45 | 20.2% |
| | Disagree | 80 | 35.9% |
| | Strongly Disagree | 33 | 14.8% |

8.28. Appendix: Mann-Whitney U-test ""The last time you saw or knew about a colleague buying Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products, you felt pressure to do it as well"

| Ranks | | | | |
|--|--------|-----|-----------|--------------|
| | Gender | N | Mean Rank | Sum of Ranks |
| The last time you saw or knew about a colleague buying "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products", you felt pressure to do it as well | Female | 114 | 95.96 | 10939.50 |
| | Male | 108 | 127.90 | 13813.50 |
| | Total | 222 | | |

Test Statistics^a

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| | The last time you saw or knew about a colleague buying "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly products", you felt pressure to do it as well |
| Mann-Whitney U | 4384.500 |
| Wilcoxon W | 10939.500 |
| Z | -3.859 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

8.29. Appendix: Custom Tables "You fear other people could think of you as a person who does not buy Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product"

| | | Count | Column N % |
|--|-------------------|-------|------------|
| You fear other people could think of you as a person who does not buy "Green/Bio/Eco-friendly product" | Strongly Agree | 8 | 3.6% |
| | Agree | 9 | 4.0% |
| | Neutral | 73 | 32.7% |
| | Disagree | 75 | 33.6% |
| | Strongly Disagree | 58 | 26.0% |