

Consumer Altruism towards Pro-Environmental Purchasing Behaviour: Extending Norm Activation Theory with The Presence of Social Norms

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A worldwide rapid ecological sensitivity can be observed, and altruism serves as a mechanism for engaging in environmental behaviours. Though people believe that the choices they make are rational, in reality, social influences greatly pressure their decisions. Having noted the paucity of normative behavioural literature, this study endeavoured to examine how altruistic and social factors influence on the pro-environmental purchasing behaviour of green FMCG consumers in Sri Lanka, by advancing the Norm Activation Theory. A cross-sectional survey was conducted among consumers over 18 years old with purchasing power, and the convenience sampling method was deployed for data collection through a structured self-administered questionnaire. 369 usable responses were obtained and analyzed using Structured Equation Modelling (SEM). The study uncovered that consumers' pro-environmental purchasing behaviours are deeply connected with their internalized norms and individual experiences from others or society at large. Accordingly, social norms, directly and indirectly, influence pro-environmental purchasing behaviour. Surprisingly, awareness of consequences demarcates a detrimental effect, while ascription of responsibility does not directly lead towards pro-environmental purchasing actions, where both were found to have an indirect impact through the mediator of personal norms. This study provides a cherished contribution to the existing literature on ecological behaviour by intensifying the norm activation theory using the social norms theory. This establishes the necessity of addressing the altruism of people to achieve a sustainable solution for ecological disputes. Green FMCG organizations are essentially required to be involved with the social aspects of consumers in strategic interactions with customers and to pursue them for long-term relationships. Ultimately, if FMCG organizations strategically persuade customers to buy green products if consumers are self-motivated to buy as internalized to norms, and if policymakers are more efficient in socializing, it will reduce the negativities of FMCG consumption towards nature and will lead to shrinking the ecological imbalance and biodiversity issues of the planet.

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