



# Sustainable Development: The Role of Green Products

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**Abstract:** Nowadays, the importance of sustainable development is increasing. But at the same time our consumption levels are also increasing which threaten the idea of sustainable development. Therefore, along with sustainable development, sustainable consumption is also important. At this juncture, it is necessary to think about environmentally sustainable way of consumption i.e., consumption of green products which is one of the very effective tools to achieve sustainable development. The purpose of this paper is to discuss about such products and how they contribute to sustainable development. The paper is theoretical in nature prepared with the help of available literature. Finally, the paper suggests some ways to increase the consumption of green products.

**IndexTerms** – Green products, sustainable development, environmentally conscious behaviour

## I. INTRODUCTION

Today, the world is progressing along with overexploitation of nature. As a result of such exploitations there are many consequences in nature. We are witnessing many natural calamities continuously. All this is due to human's uncontrolled exploitation of nature. Aindrila Biswas (2016) reported that change in consumption pattern has led to overconsumption or unsustainable consumption and overexploitation of resources. On this occasion, the importance of development considering nature is increasing. Only such development lasts long. So, it is the duty of humans to protect our environment for future generations. Conservation of environment is essential for the well-being of mankind. Practicing green consumption is one of the best ways to do that. Undoubtedly, such consumption is of great importance in the current state of environment. This paper discusses about some important concepts related to green consumption such as green products, green consumers etc.

## Objective

The main objective is to understand the relevance of an effective tool for environment sustainability such as the consumption of green products and suggest ways to improve green consumerism.

## Methodology

This paper is theoretical in nature. On the basis of existing literature, the paper discussed about green products and its features and benefits to the consumers and to the environment. Multiple data bases were used in the process of searching articles for preparing this paper. Google Scholar was the main data base used for getting an overview of the currently available literature and articles are also searched from SAGE, SpringerLink and JSTOR. The terms used for searching literature include green products, environment sustainability, environmentally conscious behaviour etc.

## Discussion

**Green Products:** There is no widespread agreement on what exactly makes a product green. According to Hauw- Sen Tan (2018), one of the popular topics of research that is still ongoing is the definition of green products. Some general guidelines include that a green product:

- Does not present a health hazard to people or animals.
- Is relatively efficient in its use of resources during manufacture, use and disposal.
- Does not incorporate materials derived from endangered species or threatened environments.
- Does not contribute to excessive waste in its use or packaging and

- Does not rely on unnecessary use of or cruelty to animals.
- Other favourable attributes from the green point of view are the incorporation of recycled materials into the product and the product's own recyclability.

Thus, a green product is a sustainable product designed to minimize its environmental impacts during its whole lifecycle and even after it is of no use. Green products are usually identified by having two basic goals- reducing waste and maximising resource efficiency. They are manufactured using toxic free ingredients and environmentally friendly procedures. Some of the characteristics of green products are:

- Grown without the use of toxic chemicals and within hygienic conditions.
- Can be recycled, reused and is biodegradable in nature.
- Comes with eco - friendly packaging.
- Uses the least resources.
- Is eco – efficient.
- Has reduced or zero carbon footprint.
- Has reduced or zero plastic foot print.

Shruti P. Maheshwari (2014) states that if a product has a low environmental impact, it is regarded as an environmentally sustainable product. Generally, each consumer who shows the environmentally friendly behaviour is called a green consumer (Salwa Mkik et al., 2017). Kumar and Ghodeswar (2015) states that green consumers are those who take into consideration the environmental consequences of their consumption patterns and intend to modify their purchase and consumption behaviour for reducing the environmental impact. According to Ling and Hong (2015) reusable is an important attribute that consumers are most concerned with because it brings multiple consequences. Due to the attribute of reusable, green products allow consumers to make fewer purchases and help to reduce expenses and benefit from the result of time saving and convenient. Reusable green products also encourage consumers to make effective use of resources. Energy saving design is another important attribute that consumers value in green products. It helps to reduce energy consumption thereby reduces expenses. Reusable or natural/ biodegradable nature helps to promote physical and mental health of consumers. By adopting natural and biodegradable materials, manufacturers not only help to mitigate the likelihood of harming consumer's health but also deliver a sense of security at the same time.

Green consumption considers the environmental impact, resource efficiency and consumer rights mode of consumption. It is based on consumer health protection and resource conservation and conforms to people's health and environmental protection; its core is the sustainable consumption. It may contribute to sustainable growth by harmonizing between the fulfilment of demands and the preservation of the environment during the collection, usage and handling of goods. Therefore, green consumption is a crucial part of sustainable socio- economic development (Zheng et al., 2020).

#### Advantages of using green products

- Cost effective products: Green products last longer than conventional products. Moreover, these products consume less energy and other resources reducing the bills of the users. For example; solar speakers can last for ten hours just by charging with solar energy.
- Low maintenance: If operated responsibly and maintained properly, the green products result in low maintenance costs. Take green buildings, for example. They market themselves not only for being environmentally friendly but also for less operational costs.
- Improves health: Since eco – friendly products are made from materials that are free from harmful chemicals and components, they not only improve physical but also mental health. In green buildings, large windows are installed which allows healthy and fresh air along with natural lighting in abundance. It improves mental health and reduces stress.
- Prevents overuse of resources: Green products reduce the threat of overuse of resources and fossil fuels and encourages the generation of energy using natural resources.
- Protects the environment: Green products are made from organic and biodegradable materials and are designed to use least non-renewable resources and toxic chemicals to produce energy. This reduces the generation of greenhouse gases like CFCs, ozone, methane etc. and hence prevents pollution and deterioration of environment.

These are the only few benefits of using green products. In the real sense there are a number of advantages we can derive from the use of such products.

### Conclusion and suggestion

It can be concluded that green or eco – friendly products are those products which do not harm the environment, whether in their production, use or disposal. These products have positive effects in abundance on the environment as they are less toxic, biodegradable, recyclable, energy efficient, renewable due to which they are termed as green products. We are living in an era which urgently requires going green. Going green has much more advantage for the society as well as for the environment. But the common masses are still ignorant about the importance and benefits of going green. The following are some of the suggestions to encourage the use of green products:

- Digital media platforms can be used by green entrepreneurs to propagate awareness about their products which helps to stimulate green consumption.
- Awareness programmes of environmental degradation and benefits of green products must be launched along with the cooperation of NGOs to boost green consumerism.
- Manufactures of green products should ensure a better quality always, which encourage consumers to use such products.
- Also, they should ensure easy access to green products by making them available on a large scale.
- It is advisable to provide incentives like subsidies to consumers to promote the use environmentally sustainable products.

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