

# Chapter 15

## Green Consumption Behaviour for Sustainable Development



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### 15.1 Concept of Green Consumption

Green consumption interchangeably known as sustainable consumption, ethical consumption, and responsible consumption is a form of consumption that is attuned with the protection of the environment for the present and the future generations. It ascribes consumers' concern to address environmental issues through embracing environmentally friendly behavior, such as the use of renewable energy, carrying out organic activities, reduce, recycle, reuse, which leads to zero impact on climate.

Working definition of sustainable consumption by (UNCSD) United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (1994) "The use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, while minimizing the use of natural resources, toxic materials, and emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle, so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations." There are three principal areas of developed Green consumption: Green energy, Green food, and Green clothing.

Green energy or renewable energy originates from natural sources, such as sunlight, wind, hydro, tidal, plants, algae, geothermal, and biomass can be naturally reloaded. Green consumption focuses on the natural source of energy rather than non-renewable. Green energy does not dispense greenhouse gas and has a slight or no impact on the environment.

Green food is organic food that does not require chemical fertilizers and chemicals to grow. Food like milk, eggs are considered green when it is acquired from animals reared in a natural setting without injecting drugs and antibiotics.

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Green clothing is considered organic if its manufacturing process does not consist of any non-biodegradable products, a fabric made up of natural fibers without using chemicals that affect the environment. Fabrics made of recycled products; reused products can be considered green. As the textile industry has contributed a lot to environmental degradation from the waste coming out from looms and factories, must aim towards green clothing using sustainable methods in order to make greener environment (Anonymous, 2020a, 2020b).

### ***15.1.1 Origin and Need of Green Consumption***

In the 1960s and early 1970s, western countries faced environmental pollution due to development in the industrial sector, which outgrew their economy and population as well, resulting from the development of a novel idea, i.e. Green consumption.

During the 1980s first-ever American 'green' brands started appearing in the market. Meanwhile, in 1980, the first book 'The Green consumer Guide' was published in the U.K. At the same time in Japan, a movement named 'Buy Green' was started by nearly 700 companies. With the coming year in the 1990s American market faced shortage of demand for green products, but after a decade in the early 2000s, again green product's demand increased.

Thereafter, consumers began to go for sustainability, accepted to spend more money on green products that assure sustainable means of production. Expansion of sustainable form of consumption, organic foods' consumption, high consciousness about the benefit of recycled goods was there (Harrison et al., 2005).

India had been growing rapidly for six decades, after independence attention towards the rapid growth of the Indian economy and relaxation in trade resultant the start of industrial growth. Although Pre-independence India already witnessed the Industrial Revolution in the 1850s resulting start of degradation of environmental resources.

As a result of the population explosion, India faced shrinkage of natural resources too. The resulting need for emphasis to protect the environment. Stringent laws and regulations came into force by the Indian constitution to tackle environmental issues. The Water (Prevention and control of pollution) Act (1974), The Air (Prevention and control of pollution) Act (1981), CPCB (Central Pollution Control Board), and Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in 1991 had launched the eco-labeling scheme known as the Eco mark. With the rise in per capita income, the buying power of Indians has enhanced too, hence the business enterprise attempted to persuade and motivate the people to use environmentally friendly products. According to Pandey (2017), Regardless, being the third biggest economy on the planet. India is home to one-sixth of the world's kin and has the second biggest populace on the planet after China, and the biggest number of individuals living beneath the worldwide neediness line. On account of this sheer size and development, sustainability is a challenge. However, India emerges third largest contributor to the global greenhouse, India raised their concern for green marketing and green consumerism.

Unsustainable consumption practices, massive pressure on the environment, motivate the enterprise and business to work on developing awareness among people regarding green products, environmental issues through advertisement and marketing. Now people are willing to spend on green products and choosing green consumerism (Shamsi and Siddiqui, 2017).

According to an International report on sustainable living (2009) 'Greendex', which measures how consumers respond to environmental issues across the globe. The report measures the scores of housing, transport, food, and goods. India positioned first on this index among 18 countries. Results show that Indian consumers are most recorded concerned about environmental footprint and choosing sustainable products. But within the next 11 years, changes in the economy and socio-economic trends affected the environment directly and indirectly. India as well as the whole globe has a long challenge to deal with environmental issues. All need to realize that development with sustainability is a need of the hour (Greendex, 2009).

## 15.2 Sustainability and Sustainable Development

Word 'sustainability' came into existence in the 1980s when people became aware of environmental problems such as overpopulation, scarcity of natural resources, and climate change, etc. resultant from industrial expansion. At that time, media and public figures started to draw the focus of consumers towards sustainability, and people eventually came to know that sustainability and development are not mutually exclusive, rather interdependent and go with synergy. The report of Brundtland from the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, under the title 'Our common future' clutch the attention of consumers towards sustainability, it defines sustainable development as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". It stressed the seriousness of pursuing sustainable development, to diminish the abandoned use of the natural resource. Furthermore, the Brundtland commission recognized three major elements of sustainable development: Environment, Economy, and Society. The concept of sustainability is not just the conservation of natural resources to protect the environment, but it is beyond it, consisting of an unchanging and healthy economy and improved quality of life. Brundtland Commission (1983).

(IUCN) International Union for the Conservation of Nature (1991) defined sustainable development as "improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems". Additionally, it explained a sustainable economy as the result of sustainable development, and it documented nine principles that shape it, for example preserving earth's strength and diversity, shortening the consumption of non-sustainable assets, keeping within the earth's carrying capacity, changing individual attitudes and practices, and so on. Consequently, sustainable societies are those that follow the former ideologies, choosing for the sustainable usage of natural and renewable resources.

Thus, sustainability can be mended in multiple areas like energy, wellbeing, economy, welfare, security, financial, family, humanity, personal, etc. Being sustainable means the ability to bear and maintain a process at a desirable level, hence it is also important that managerial, functional, operational, and technical requirements are worked out. To achieve sustainability, we must convert the consumers into green consumers.

### ***15.2.1 Green Consumption and Sustainable Development***

Consuming green products, whether it is food, clothing, or anything else, not only improves health, ecosystem but also leads to sustainable development. The raw materials required for making green products are biodegradable, organic, and renewable which a minimum effect on the environment. Hence, it steps towards sustainability without compromising the present needs. Similarly, the use of green energy i.e., renewable energy, leads to sustainable development.

## **15.3 Greendex Research on Consumer Behavior**

A survey was done by National Geographic/GlobeScan Greendex, an international research approach to measure and monitor consumer progress towards environmentally sustainable consumption. Findings of the study done in 2014 showed positive results, as countries were more concerned about environmental issues compared to the previous survey in 2012. Greendex comprehensive ranking system, regulate each country's Greendex score, researchers surveyed more than 18,000 consumers. The researchers inquired consumers about their habits in a realm of different areas, including conservation of energy, food buying behavior, and transportation practices, likings in terms of organic and conventional products, and environmental knowledge and attitude. The rank of 18 countries was uncovered based upon data analysis. The countries like Australia, India, China, the United States, the United Kingdom, Brazil, South Korea, Argentina, Hungary, Russia, Mexico, Sweden, Spain, South Africa, Germany, France, Japan, and Canada were included in the survey.

India got the first position, drawing in a Greendex score of 61.4. In precise, the country gets high marks for its housing, transportation, and food selection, resulting from positive reinforcement, as India seems to be the most easily influenced among, with Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina to change when they were informed about their personal influence on the environment, while British, German, and Swedish consumers were the least influenced countries. China was the second most sustainable country. South Korea has moved into third place before Brazil and Argentina. Canadians and Americans remained lowest. Their main demise was their falling

score in the area of housing. Various sub-indexes based on which different countries were ranked on Greendex are as under:

- ***Housing***

Consumers in India, Mexico, and China, scores have increased since 2012 regarding sustainable consumption at the domestic level. While countries like the USA, Canada, and Japan have decreased scores in domestic consumption. Germans and Canadians record the major cuts in their housing sub-index scores, compelled by household energy consumption.

- ***Transportation***

Consumers in India still stood the highest on the transportation sub-index, whereas consumers in North America rank at the lowest. Europeans are more inclined towards using public transportation than the USA, Brazil, and China. Since 2012, Chinese consumers have adopted unsustainable habits, like possessing at least one car or truck and driving alone often, they have declined their scores in transportation.

- ***Food***

Results revealed that food consumption habits are improving, as food sub-index scores have increased in 11 of the 17 countries since 2012. Scores are low in countries like Sweden and Spain, determined by factors such as high chicken and seafood consumption in both countries. Indian consumers were still in the first position of sustainable consumption in terms of food, because of fairly little non-vegetarian consumption. Mexican consumers continue to score lowermost on the food sub-index, accompanied by Japanese, American, and Spanish consumers.

- ***Goods***

Since 2012, Greendex goods scores had reduced for consumers in 11 of the countries surveyed, while increased in five, resulting in unsustainable behavior in consuming goods. South Korea is at the top in green consumption behavior regarding goods. Canadians and Americans at the bottom of the index, while Swedish consumers registered the good improvement since 2012, by repairing broken items and using their own durable biodegradable shopping bags instead of plastic.

- ***Intent to change behavior***

Overall results of the study showed that after knowing the environmental footprints, Mexicans, followed by Brazilians, Indians, and Argentineans, are more determined to improve their green consumption behavior, as consumers in these countries are easy to be influenced, while in countries like British, German, and Swedish, consumers are not liable to change their behavior towards green consumptions even after knowing their environmental footprint. Consistently, consumers in the large emerging economies of India and China have scored highest in green consumption behavior. Change in behavior the only way to achieve sustainability in the coming time.

## 15.4 Green Consumer and Their Behavior

- *Green consumer*

According to Valentini (2011), “Green consumer is a consumer who, for every kind of consumer choice, choose something less hazardous for the environment and human health.”

According to Kutloano (2011), “green consumer shops with awareness, in other words, they understand the implications of their purchases. Basically, they know the origin, source of their product and more or less where it will end up after consumption.”

An in-depth awareness and concern about environmental issues are essential, but the readiness to spend higher prices for certified and less detrimental products seems to be more important.

- *Non-green consumer*

According to Erica, a non-green consumer is a person who does not pay attention to his purchase, who does not care about health, who does not care about the environment, and who is selfish. Basically, non-green consumers are those who don't care about organic or inorganic, who is ignorant about environmental issues, and consume a lot, beyond their needs. High consumption levels are considered clear indicators to classify a non-green consumer.

Non-green consumers neither recycle nor look at the quality of the products they buy, don't pay attention when purchasing consumer goods.

In the words of Belk (1988), “people are what they buy and possess, and non-green consumers' indifference and non-consciousness about environmental issues emerge from their uncontrolled consumption.”

Non-green consumers neither show respect for the environment when s/he goes walking in the mountain nor s/he pay attention to preserving and not spoiling.

### 15.4.1 Behavior and Green Consumption Behavior

Behaviors are deeply entrenched in social and institutional settings. We are directed much by what others around us say and do. We often find ourselves 'locked in' to unsustainable behaviors, despite our own best intention (Jackson, 2005).

Human behavior is the response of an individual to internal and external stimuli. Behavior plays an important role in individual life, some behavior takes us in the right direction in lifelike politeness, tidiness, timeliness, eating healthy, hydrating oneself, etc. But some behaviors are needed to change as creates problems in one or other way like smoking, poor diet, lack of exercise, aggressive, stealing, telling lie, etc. Getting out into the new behavior and doing something new is helpful to foster our life. Change is good because you have the opportunity to embrace newly experienced. It is an important prerequisite for making progress.

## Green Consumption Behavior: Pro-environmental Behavior

Numerous environmental issues cause a threat to the sustainability of the environment, in which air pollution, water pollution, climate change, drought, famine, global warming, water scarcity are common. Most of the problems have their root cause in human behavior and can be coped with by performing significant behavior. Modification in human behavior regarding sustainable consumption can be useful in coping with environmental issues.

Green indicates the conservation of natural resources, while consumption means destruction. Consumption is usually a physical, social, economic process that is influenced by nature, surroundings, psychology of consumer, geography, culture, norms, and societal arrangements.

Green consumption together generates an idea of a set of practices of environment-friendly activities. It is one form of pro-environmental behavior that make little harm to the environment. According to Kollmuss and Agyeman (2002), pro-environmental behavior is defined as “behavior that consciously seeks to minimize the negative impact of one’s actions on the natural and built world”.

Individuals knowingly choose this type of behavior an individual to get a minimal effect on the environment. Some research in this field with empirical support claim pro-environmental behavioral multidimensional construct:

- **Public sphere:** Participating in the environmental campaign, rallies, and members of NGOs working for environmental issues.
- **Private sphere:** Purchasing green products, like energy-efficient electric items, doing organic composting, using public transport instead of private vehicles, recycling, etc.

Many influencing effects impact the pro-environmental behavior or green consumption behavior.

## 15.5 Factors Affecting Green Consumption Behavior

Certain factors affect the behavior of individuals towards green consumption, some factors trigger the behavior while other factors restrict the behavior. After analyzing various researches on factors affecting green consumption behavior, the authors identified that all the factors that influence green consumption behavior can be broadly categorized under four types: personal, societal, governmental, and functional factors.

### 15.5.1 Personal Factors:

- **Perception:**

**Perceived consumer effectiveness**—When consumers estimate that any step taken by them leads to impact the environment positively, and in being able to bring about outcomes that he or she values and wants to achieve.

**Perceived seriousness of environmental problems**—It is the perception of consumers towards environmental issues and how much the consumer is serious about the issues.

**Perceived benefit**—Consumers' perception towards the product will provide benefit to them and the environment.

**Perceived risk**—Consumer's perception towards the risk with the product after purchasing it is a negative correlation with green behavior.

**Perceived usefulness**—Consumer's perception towards the product that usage of that product will be useful in terms of minimal environmental and health effect.

**Perceived environmental responsibility**—Consumer perception towards their responsibility for environmental problems and contribution in combating the problems.

**Conditional value**—It is a perceived usefulness of an alternative green product in a specific situation. It is influenced by the physical and social value that enhances the product's social and functional value.

**Epistemic value**—It is perceived usefulness attained by a certain product that will stimulate curiosity and able to satisfy the desire for knowledge among consumers. Epistemic value also contains innovation in an existing product that keeps consumers stick to the existing brand.

**Self-image**—Self-image is basically how an individual sees himself/herself, be it abilities, appearance, and personality.

**Self-identity**—Self-identity is a whole picture of who we believe we are, while self-image is one piece of that picture.

**Social identity**—Social identity refers perception of an individual about himself based on his membership, religious group, etc.

- **Attitude**—It refers to the feeling of someone towards something, it can be positive, negative, or maybe neutral. Our positive attitude is a prerequisite to our green behavior.
- **Belief**—This consists of Control belief, Outcome belief, Citizenship belief, and Response efficacy. Control belief means when consumers believe that they can control the environmental problems by being green. Outcome belief means when an individual belief in a predicted future outcome to be beneficial. Citizenship belief when the consumer thinks he should be a responsible citizen for whatever happening to the environment. Response efficacy when a person belief the recommended action leads to reduce the risk and avoid threats.



- **Knowledge**—Is how many consumers know about environmental issues, different consumption practices? Whether they know about global environmental, policy knowledge, and waste knowledge or not is detrimental to green consumption.
- **Behavior**—Behavior have certain elements like intrinsic motivation, emotion, and moral. Intrinsic means internally, if the consumer is self-motivated to conserve the environment, he'll go for the green. Consumers who are more emotionally attached to environmental issues tend to become green consumers. If the consumer has moral values to save the environment, it will be visible in his/her behavior.

### 15.5.2 *Situational Factor*

Service provision or consumers' job profile also acts as a major influencer while purchasing a product. Other situational factors are socio-demographics, which include age, education level, and income. Studies show that the more the age more concerned about the environment a person is, the more the consumer is educated, the more he'll be concerned about environmental issues, while in the case of income, the consumer who can spend more is more likely to act green.

### 15.5.3 *Societal Factors*

- **Normative beliefs**—Consumers incline to behave according to the norms he/she believes. Consumers sometimes change their behavior, thoughts, or values to be liked and accepted by others.
- **Subjective norms**—It is a perceived social pressure from others within a society. It is of two types, Descriptive norms (commonly practiced) and Injunctive norm (morally right) both have a great influence on green behavior.
- **Social value**—It is a means and ends that people have in their life to live it like status, health, peace, enlightenment, and power and influence.
- **The socio-cultural**—This factor is the combination of society and culture, which affect thought, behavior and feeling.

### 15.5.4 *Functional Factors*

- **Quality**—Quality of products plays a major role, some consumers opt for quality irrespective of the price, while others consider price ignoring product quality.
- **Price**—Consumers are sometimes willing to go green, but price acts as a major barrier, price-conscious consumers always consider the price before purchasing any product.

### 15.5.5 Governmental Factors

- **Availability of green products** - If greener products will be available in sufficient amounts, then there are more chances that consumers will buy them.
- **Accessibility of green products**—Along with availability, accessibility must be considered. In a market, green products may be available, but because of the high price, they may not be accessed by consumers.
- **Policy intervention**—The government, along with NGOs and other private agency must develop policies regarding green products. There must be a subsidy on purchasing green, and a relaxation in percentage of tax to the shopkeeper who sold greener products. Implementation of good policy can enhance green consumption practices.

## 15.6 Barriers to Green Consumption

- **Price:** First thing that acts as a barrier to be greener is price. Most of the average consumers purchase their products only based on price, which reflects in a consumers' mind while purchasing products. People choose to spend less without considering how that product can cause problems to their health and environment. It seems too expensive to buy organic products for them.
- **Low availability:** As more companies develop non-sustainable products than eco-friendly products, people usually go for products that are abundant around them.
- **Less awareness:** There are more advertisements for non-green products than green products, as media plays an important role in opening the horizon among consumers. Consumers purchase those products which are mostly seen by them on television, videos, etc. What they see goes into their subconscious mind, and while purchasing a product subconsciously, they buy what they have seen or heard about.
- **Lack of concern:** Some consumers are aware, have accessibility, and can afford green products, yet they have less concern about the environment. The only way to change their level of concern is by making them more and more aware, adding them to the environmental campaign, telling them about the dreadful effects of unsustainable consumption, and the use of various intervention strategies to alter their behavior.

These barriers must be thoroughly looked upon, and strategies can be worked out to overcome these. There are certain models which can be used to change the behavior of consumers, accompanied by overcoming barriers.

## 15.7 Behavior Change and Behavior Change Model

- **Behavior change:** It refers to any change and alteration in present behavior of human. Interventions has huge ability to change the current behavior pattern. Making change in behavior is not an easy task, however researchers have discovered numerous methods to make desirable changes in human behavior, these are being utilized by doctors, educators, extensionist, etc.

### 15.7.1 The Elements of Change *Cherry k (2019)*

There are three basic and most important component in changing human behavior these are as follows:

- **Readiness to change:** Do individual have knowledge so that they can be ready to make long lasting change in behavior?
- **Barriers to change:** is there any blockages that are preventing individual to change the behavior?
- **Expect relapse:** what condition might occur that make individual to perform early behavior?

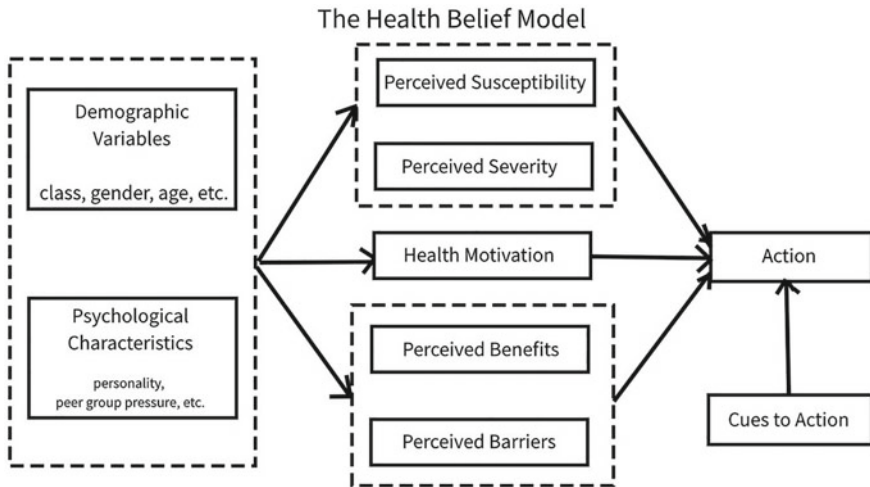
### 15.7.2 Behavior Change Models to Trigger Behavior Change

Models of behavior change elucidate why the particular behavior change. In behavioral determinations, the major factors such as personal, environmental, and behavioral attributes are cited by these models. In the past few years, these models are being used in various fields, like health, education, energy, criminology, and international development. Some of the behavior change model are given below:

- **Health belief model (1950s)—**

To predict health-related behaviors, especially regarding health services, a socio-psychological health behavior model, i.e., the health belief model (HBM), has been developed.

The HBM was developed by social psychologist Irwin M. Rosenstock, Golfrey M., Hochbaum, S. Stephen Kegeles, and Howard Leventhal at the U.S. Public Health Services in the year 1950s. This model is still known as the most outstanding and utilized theory in human behavior study. Figure 15.1 shows that the HBM advocating the individual's engagement (or lack of engagement) in health-promoting behavior depends on the individual's belief regarding their health problems, perceived benefits of action, and barriers to action and self-efficacy. A stimulus or cue to action should be available to trigger the health-promoting behavior (Morris et al., 2012a, 2012b).



**Fig. 15.1** Health belief model

- ***The 4 E's model of behavior change (2005)***—

The '4e's model arisen from the study of Jackson (2005). The study focused on strategies of behavior change and promoted behavior change under four categories. The Center of this model has the behavior and attitude of individuals, and interventions such as information, education, and incentives are intended to affect the behavior. The core area of this model is to understand the behavior in an individual's lifestyle context, starting from their current position, and then understanding the way they live. As there is no single solution to influence behavior, but in several ways. So in Fig. 15.2 the 4 Es framework has come up with the mixed interventions, such as Enable, encourage, exemplify, and engage to promote the behavior change (Allen, 2020; Jackson, 2005)

- ***Theory of reasoned action (TRA, 1967)***—

TRA was developed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen in the year 1967, which explained in Fig. 15.3 that the association between human behavior and attitude. Primarily, theory predicts the behavior of an individual based on their pre-existing attitudes and intentions. The theory says the decision of an individual to engage in a particular behavior is depending on the expected outcome that is assumed by that individual (Anonymous, 2019).

- ***Theory of planned behavior (1980)***—

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is an extension of the theory of reason action (TRA). In Fig. 15.4 TPB understands and foresees the behaviors which postulate that behavior is determined by behavioral intentions and under certain circumstances by perceived behavioral control. Behavioral intentions are blended with three

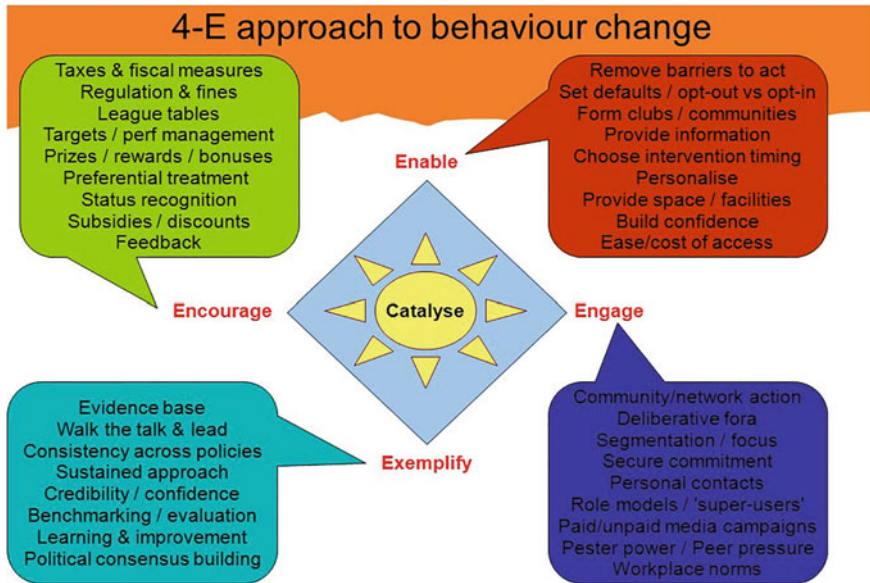


Fig. 15.2 4E's model

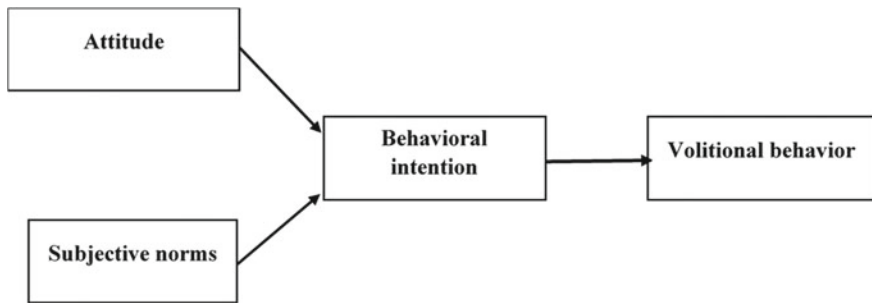


Fig. 15.3 Theory of reasoned action

factors: subjective norms, attitudes toward the behavior, and perceived behavior control (Kan & Fabrigar, 2017).

• *Trans-theoretical or stages of change model (1970)—*

The Trans-theoretical Model, also known as The Stages of Change (SoC) model was developed in the late 1970s by investigators James Prochaska and Carlo Di Clemente. This model is used extensively as a cognitive model, which categorizes individuals in five categories that signify different milestones or levels of motivational readiness in a continuum of behavior change.

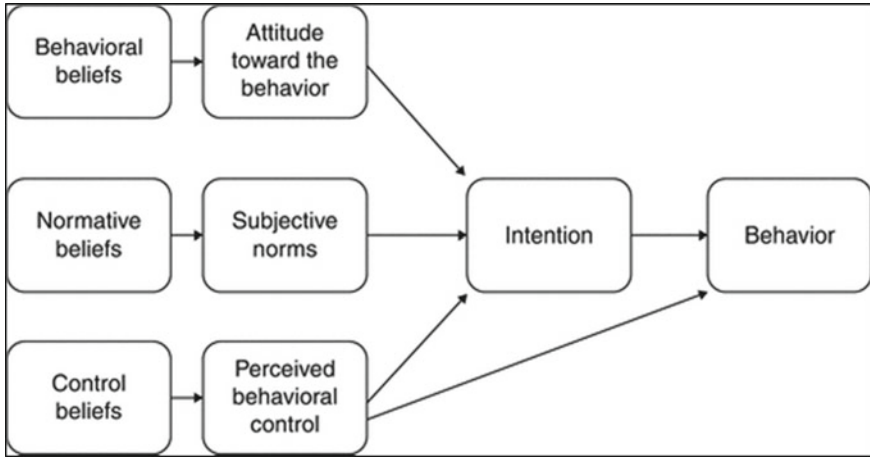


Fig. 15.4 Theory of planned behavior

According to this model, changes happen slowly, and relapses are an unavoidable part of the process to make an enduring change. In the beginning, the individual often reluctant to change, but sooner or later they develop a proactive and dedicated approach for behavior change.

This model elucidates that a steady movement of little steps requires regularly to achieve a bigger objective.

Figure 15.5 shows the six stages (i) pre-contemplation, (ii) contemplation, (iii) preparation, (iv) action, and (v) maintenance (vi) Relapse stage (Morris et al., 2012a, 2012b).

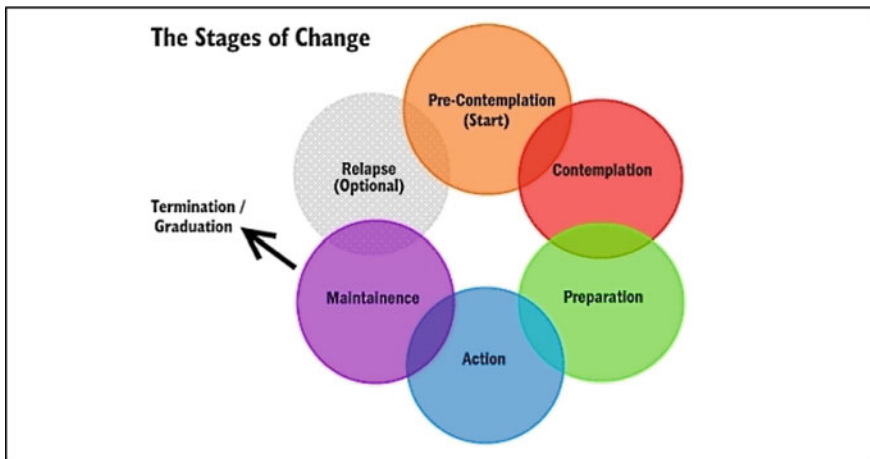
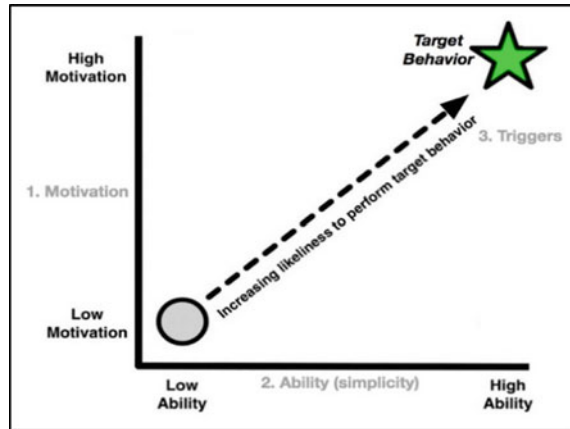


Fig. 15.5 Trans-theoretical change model

**Fig. 15.6** Fogg behavior model



• **BJ Fogg's behavior model (FBM) (2009)**—

B. J. Fogg proposed the Fogg Behavior Model (FBM) in the year 2009, to analyze the behavior change. 'Behavior' is a word, Fogg used to depict an activity that somebody performs. He raised the question that how we can skill an individual to do the right actions. Fogg said three elements are needed to change the behavior. These are 'B = MAT' i.e., Motivation, Ability, and a Trigger (prompt). Collaboration of these three elements leads to the desired change in the behavior (Anonymous, 2017).

Figure 15.6 shows the first element that is 'Motivation' further includes three drives, namely 'sensation', 'anticipation', and 'belonging'. 'Sensation' has two sides: pleasure and pain. Individuals are motivated to seek pleasure and avoid pain. 'Anticipation', a second core motivator, has two sides: hope and fear. 'Third core element, i.e., 'Belonging' is a social dimension that has two sides: social acceptance and social rejection. People usually perform socially acceptable things.

The second element "Ability" includes promoting the target behavior for which the users have the high ability. BJ Fogg lists dimensions that characterized the high ability or simplicity of performing a behavior, i.e. money, time, physiological effort, brain cycle/thought process, and social deviance.

Thirdly, "Trigger", later termed as Prompt, are reminders that may be direct or indirect to the performance of a behavior. It is the starting gun to fire, and they'll get going. There are three types of Trigger 'spark', 'facilitator', and 'signal'.

Thus, to inculcate green consumerism in behavior, any of these models can be used by educationists, extensionists, and environmentalists.

## 15.8 Green Marketing: A Precursor to Green Consumerism

Green consumption not merely signifies purchasing green products, but also act, behave and being green. Green consumerism comes from a desire to protect scarce natural resources for the next generation, without compromising the need of the present generation. Green marketing plays an important role in spreading green consumerism. Nayyar (2015) “Green marketing refers to holistic marketing concept wherein the production, marketing, consumption and disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment.”

According to American Marketing Association (2020), “green marketing is a market of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Thus, green marketing incorporated a broad range of categories like product modification, changes in production process, green packaging, as well as changes on advertisement.”

### 15.8.1 Strategies for Successful Green Marketing

There are certain green marketer need to take into consideration while doing green marketing.

- **Identify your consumer:** First and foremost, it is to gather information about your consumers to whom you are going to give your goods and services, know their awareness towards green products, their knowledge, their needs, demand, interest, etc.
- **Educate your consumers:** Second thing, after knowing their awareness level, provide them information about different green products, how these products are beneficial for their health and the environment as a whole.
- **Credibility and transparency:** It means the company should carry all the things in their product which they have mentioned and claim to be. They should always be transparent to their consumer about the ingredients, packaging of the products.
- **Assure the buyer:** Consumers should be assured that the product is environment friendly and true to the claim, and will not lead to an unsustainable cord in the future too.
- **Consider their price:** Price is one of the barriers while purchasing the product. Consider the pocket of buyers, if the product is of high price, then tell consumers about its importance, how it functions differently from other products.



## 15.9 Green Products and Their Characteristics

Green products refer to the product which has an environmental friendly nature, various characteristics of green products are:

- Products with natural ingredients.
- Originally grown products.
- Recyclable, reusable, and biodegradable products.
- Products with eco-friendly packaging.
- Energy-efficient products.
- Products using recycled contents, non-toxic chemicals.
- Not affect the health of humans and animals badly.
- Not developed from unnecessary cruelty to animals.
- Not developed by killing endangered species.

## 15.10 Suggestions to Enhance Green Consumption Behaviour

Consuming green products is one of the major aspects in the direction to attain sustainable development. Changing the behaviour of consumers towards green consumption is one of the major challenges for environmentalists, governments, NGOs, agencies. If they get success in changing the behaviour then soon we can achieve sustainable development goals. Some of the suggestions are:

- **Awareness stage:** First and most important step to be considered, without awareness no consumer will go for the green. Forceful backing is required to make the consumer aware of environmental issues. Rallies, billboards, street plays, advertisements, short stories can work for raising awareness. Mass media can be used successfully for this purpose.
- **Information and knowledge buildup stage:** Providing information to build up their knowledge must be the next crucial step. Awaken consumers must be exposed to overall information regarding prevailing environmental problems, like climate change, global warming, other disturbances, and its global, local individual effect. Strategies like lectures, demonstrations, short videos, and short films must be shown to impart knowledge regarding problems. Research results must be exposed to the consumers that how badly the things have affected the environment so far.
- **Cause of the problem and alternative solution:** It is important to talk about different causes, like high energy consumption, the surge in areas like transportation, industrial sector, fossil fuel industries, etc., and its leading effect on the earth. Alternate solutions must be given, like use LEDs instead of incandescent light bulbs, use of solar lights, avoiding wastage of water, water waste management, indulging in the best of waste, minimize the use of plastic at the domestic and industrial level. Provides them the examples of countries and states who are in direction to sustainable consumption, and those that have zero or minimum carbon

emission, like Bhutan. More emphasis must be given to a conventional method of livelihood, organic farming instead of chemical fertilizers, riding a bicycle for short distance instead of motor vehicles, using handmade rugs in the home instead of plastic one, bucket bath instead of a shower, washing utensils through bucket water rather opening running water tap, etc. Such activities can be demonstrated through videos to the consumers, with minimize the use of natural resources and sustaining it.

The government, NGOs, other private agencies, schools, universities can come up together to mitigate the environmental issues. All must work hand-in-hand to combat the situation, all the above steps can be followed to make consumers conscious and alert. Various models can be developed by different institutions that aim for sustainability without compromising today's needs. Subsidies and loans with minimal interest can be provided by government banks to the ventures and ideas related to green energy. Positive reinforcement must be there by providing price and honorarium to the NGOs, or other private agencies which follow green instructions, which engages the community towards being green by various ways and means. The yearly survey must be done to find out the cleanest and organic area, village, city, and state across the nation. The survey can be done based on their green consumption, conservation of natural resources, and waste-water management. Village, city, or state which ranks first in green consumption behaviour must be awarded, their working model must be replicated in other areas of the country. Media must be involved in this process as media act as a major influencer among consumers. Government must direct media to advertise green products, and also direct manufacturers to keep the green products affordable to the general population.

Every individual of the society must realize the value of sustainable consumption to secure their natural habitat for now and for their next generations. Promoting green consumerism with proper planning, implementation and follow-up can work as a ladder towards sustainable development.

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