



**How green marketing is influencing consumer purchase decision: A qualitative research  
on generation Y Consumers in Ireland buying groceries.**

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## Abstract:

Due to growing threats to the environment, humanity is facing severe issue such as climate change, citizens across the world have shifted their focus towards green products. (Zhang and Dong, 2020). The growing consumer awareness about the environment, marketers have shifted their business strategy towards green marketing strategy in order to protect environment and increase the profitability at the same time (Banerjee et al, 2003). This study seeks to find how green marketing is influencing generation Y consumers purchase decision in Ireland. The consumer behavioural as well as the green marketing aspects will be studied through qualitative research by conducting online interviews and thematic analysis of the interview data. In order to achieve research objective generation Y is chosen because they have maximum contribution in the economic activities and will be continuing further for 10 to 20 years. Ireland is a country in which people from across the world are migrating and there is high influx of international students, so this research will give some insights about global green perspective. The focus of the research is to find (a) Identify characteristics of the products are considered green by the consumers. (b) Do green labelling and green packaging have any positive impact on buying green products. (c) Does pro-environmental behaviour lead green consumerism. (d) Examine how green advertising impacts green consumption. (d) Examine the effect of product price in purchasing green products. This study becomes immensely important as there are no studies on Irish green market and the crucial findings from this study will have impact on marketers in developing marketing strategies to sell green products based on the factors identified in this paper.

Keywords: Consumer behaviour, green marketing, Ireland, Green consumerism, green groceries, green products, green attitude, green behaviour.

# Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

## National College of Ireland Research Students Declaration Form (Thesis/Author Declaration Form)

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**Title of Thesis:** How green marketing is influencing consumer purchase decision: A qualitative research on generation Y Consumers in Ireland buying groceries.

**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> August 2022

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

Consumers are becoming increasingly conscious of the fact that their purchasing decisions have a significant environmental impact. Green marketing is the process of exchanging products or services based on their environmental benefits. Environmental factors should be taken into account at every stage of the marketing process, from new product development to communication and everything in between (Aldubai and Develi, 2022). This study seeks to explore how green marketing is influencing Generation Y consumers purchase decision in Ireland. In Ireland companies are turning green, changing their business process by efficient waste management or by the use of renewable energy, and the most difficult task is to communicate these green competencies to the consumers in order to influence their purchasing power (Failte Ireland, 2021). Companies spend lot of their marketing budget in various green marketing strategies such as promotions, green packaging, this study will aim to find whether consumers are influenced with these green marketing strategies. This chapter will provide an introduction to the study by first discussing the background and context, followed by the research problem, the research aims, objectives and questions, the significance, research methodology and finally, the structure of the dissertation.

### 1.1 Study background

The American Marketing Association originated the notion of green marketing in 1975, and it has since been known by other names such as environmental marketing, organic marketing, social marketing, and sustainable marketing (Zhu and Sarkis, 2016). The present decade has been marked by dramatic shifts that suggest a major rise in consumer awareness of climate change (Vennghaus, Henseleit and Belka, 2022). As the consumer awareness about the environment is increasing, citizen across the world has shifted their focus towards green products. In other words, today's Y generations must be conscious of their part in environmental protection by responsible behaviour, encouraging the use of ecologically friendly products, and incorporating these ideals into their everyday life (Cuc et al., 2022). Therefore, marketers have shifted their business strategy towards green marketing strategy in order to protect environment and increase the profitability at the same time (Banerjee, Iyer and Kashyap, 2003). Consumers' capacities and resources, such as the necessary time, knowledge, and skills, have a significant influence in their capacity to engage in specific behaviours, such as ecological behaviours. Beliefs and conventions have a significant role in

shaping behaviour and affect a variety of attitudes and values, including those specific to green consumer behaviour. According to studies, the central premise about these characteristics is important for family energy use, behaviour toward conservation, and the adoption of green products (Armstrong and Kotler, 2005). In this study we will even consider theory of planned behaviour (TPB) in order to understand the consumer purchasing patterns.

Eco-labelling has a substantial impact on consumer behaviour toward goods since it communicates information about customers' environmental concerns as well as product qualities. However, the perception of eco-labelling has generated some uncertainty for customers, making it difficult for them to forecast the environmental quality of items (Shabbir et al., 2020).

Green packaging, sometimes known as sustainable packaging or eco-friendly packaging, refers to package designs that have the least amount of environmental effect (Swezey and Bird, 2001). They accomplish this by reducing packaging waste, utilizing sustainable materials (such as recyclable or biodegradable packaging elements), and employing renewable energy during manufacture. In a nutshell, sustainable packaging is all about being conscious of your company's carbon footprint. Growing consumer knowledge of green packaging has resulted in a shift in consumer behaviour toward being more environmentally conscious (Swezey and Bird, 2001). This study will undertake eco-labelling, pricing, green promotions all these variables into consideration.

## 1.2 Research gap

Although, immense research has been done on green marketing in developed and developing nations, however little attention has been paid over Ireland's green market, and none of the research are targeting the segment such as meat, milk and the changes in the purchasing pattern based on various variables taken into consideration in this research. The Irish government promoting green consumption and recently a Climate Action plan at Glasgow, sets a roadmap for taking decisive action to reduce food waste by 50% and ensuring that all plastic packaging is reusable or recyclable by 2030 (Government of Ireland, 2021). As a result, the existing research is inadequate to understand the Irish green market which is constantly and rapidly evolving. Thus, marketers in Ireland will find themselves ill-equipped for green marketing strategies based on the existing research.



### 1.3 Research Aims objective and questions

Given the lack of green marketing research regarding Irish groceries market, this research will find the green marketing factors influencing the purchase decision of Generation Y consumer in Ireland buying groceries. Product creation, price, and distribution are all part of green marketing, by reducing energy use, waste, and manufacturing costs throughout the process, green marketing helps to increase sales and cut operating and production expenses. Businesses that create such environmental initiatives have the potential to become market leaders. It assists businesses in marketing their products and services. This gives them an advantage in the marketplace. This research has immense importance due to the practical implication for applying green marketing strategy, marketing mix and marketing tools based on the factors influencing purchase decisions of millennials. Based on the results of this research, market leaders, policy makers can redesign green branding, green advertising, and packaging strategy.

#### **The main objective of the research are as follows:**

Objective 1: To find whether individual environmental concerns benefit green marketing.

In this objective we will assess whether an individual behaviour leads to green consumption, we will explore the Theory of planned behaviour with respect to each individual.

Objective 2: To explore various green marketing strategies used to influence consumer purchase decision.

Every business uses green marketing strategies such as pricing, promotions, eco-labelling or green labelling, green packaging and more, all these strategies will be studied precisely, and conclusion will be drawn whether these factors have effect on influencing purchase decisions of the consumers. The corporate strategy and overall business strategy of the company does have any positive or negative effect on green marketing will be studied.

Objective 3: To assess a characteristic of a green product.

In this research objective we need to explore the qualities or traits of a product, which is considered green by the consumers. In the life cycle of a product there are various stages

involved such as raw materials to finished products and then waste management. The supporting activities associated with products such as marketing overall business strategy of the organization will also be assessed in this objective.

The following are the research questions

- (a) Identify which products are considered green by the consumers.
- (b) Do green labelling and green packaging have any positive impact on buying green products.
- (c) Does pro-environmental behaviour lead green consumerism.
- (d) Examine how green advertising impacts green consumption.
- (d) Examine the effect of product price in purchasing green products.

#### 1.4 Research significance

This study will contribute to the body of knowledge on Irish green market by evaluating the factors involved in the green purchasing patterns of the consumers in Dublin. This will help to address the shortage of research in Irish groceries market and provide the real-world value to the Irish marketers operating in Ireland.

#### 1.5 Research Methodology

Interpretivist research philosophies are considered in the context of studying green marketing. In this green marketing study primary method is prioritized over the secondary method. In primary method, interviews will be conducted with consumer buying groceries in Dublin Ireland. The interview will be designed mostly with open ended questions, to understand the real-life experiences of the consumers purchasing green products. Maximum 10 questions will be designed based on the research variables such as, price, behaviour, green labelling, advertisement, and why a particular product considered green by customer. Based on the opinions, knowledge and experience of the consumers selected in the interview, all data interpretation is done through thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is “a method for

identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data” (Cassol *et al.*, 2018) commonly used in qualitative research.

## 1.6 Structure of dissertation

The dissertation will provide the introduction to research, followed by latest literature review, research questions, methodology, analysis of the results and main findings, discussion chapter and main conclusion.

## Chapter 2: Literature review

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide the investigation of existing literature with a specific focus whether green marketing has any influence on generation Y purchasing decision. The research is focused on groceries market segment and seeks to find green marketing factors influencing the purchasing decision. This literature review has immense importance in understanding the green marketing concepts and the prior research work done by the academician. The research has gone through various research papers on green marketing and many of them have focused to green marketing related to various industries such as tourism, agriculture, manufacturing across the world, but very few academics have focussed on Irish groceries market.

### 2.2 Definition and concepts

#### **Green Marketing**

In order to have a clear understanding about the research it is vital to understand green marketing and green consumerism. Green marketing is set of activities performed by any firm which includes pricing, plan, process, production, promotion and recycling. The main motive behind these activities is to have least or nil impact on the environment (Groening et al., 2018). Green marketing, also referred to as environmental marketing or sustainable marketing, refers to a firm's efforts to develop, promote, sell, and deliver ecologically friendly products. (Sarkar, 2012). The trend toward green consumerism, such as a preference for organic food as a new way of life, has raised the market for organic food.

#### **Green Consumerism**

Chai (1996) defined green consumerism as the products purchased by the consumers that cause minimal pollution and harm to the environment. While green marketing is a managerial process, consumer's pro-environmental behaviour leads to green consumerism. There is a rising concern for protection of the environment, which has resulted in "Green Consumerism"

(Eriksson, 2002). Consumerism may be characterized as a progression that began as a method intended to protect consumers from unethical company activities. The green customer is often defined as someone who advocates eco-friendly views and/or purchases sustainable items over conventional alternatives (Boztepe, 2012). Green or environmentally friendly items are those that do not impact the environment in their use and may be reused or re-cycle for future purpose. Almost every customer has the potential to be a green consumer. For example, if a buyer has a choice between two similar items, the purchaser will pick the eco - friendly product. Consumers' favourable attitude toward the environment is seen in their shopping patterns, such as their care for CFC-free items and product reuse (Ansar, 2013).

People seek for indications regarding, how green the quality of product offerings such as if the firm has a corporate image for being green, packaging alternatives such as ecolabels, certifications, and post-consumption customer service and important green traits such as recycling. There has been minimal study that suggests that green product marketing messages have a limited impact on customer response (Kaviya, S; Priyadarshini, R G. Abhigyan, 2022).

## **Green Products**

Green products do not have any concrete scientific definition, but many researchers have coined this term. Shamdasani, Chon and Richmond (1993) defined green products as the product that will not pollute the earth or deplete natural resources and can be recycled or conserved and also has more environmentally sound content or packaging to reduce the impact on the environment (Elkington and Wasik, 1996). Green product is also referred as the product that incorporates the strategies in recycling or with recycled content, reduced packaging or using least toxic materials to reduce the impact on the natural environment. According to Mahmoud (2017), the product is at the centre of the green marketing mix, and environmentally friendly products include all aspects of the product, such as the resources used, the manufacturing process, packaging design, and so on. A green product is one that is environmentally friendly and encourages the preservation of natural ecosystems while minimizing negative environmental impacts.

The severe environment problems faced today are over population, climate change, pollution. Global climate change is directly connected to the agricultural, manufacturing and food industries, Ireland could face a devastating impact on its population as most of the people are dependent on these industries (Nekmahmud and Fekete-Farkas, 2020). These environment issue could only be resolved if most of the people prefer buying green products, and this research main goal is to understand the influential factors associated with green consumerism. Therefore, due to the growing consumer awareness about the environment and their association with green products, many companies have started applying green marketing strategies to meet customer needs and sustain long term sales profits (Nekmahmud and Fekete-Farkas, 2020). Green Marketing has become a key development in modern business and for the developed countries like Ireland.

### 2.3 Green marketing and business performance

Many industrial businesses have adopted green investment and marketing strategies. As the global age advances, investments are altering in numerous ways to be financially, socially, and environmentally sustainable. In order to improve the healthiest business performances and create a green economy via their presence, green investment, CSR, and marketing are crucial. For years marketers are discovering new marketing strategy aligned with the consumer trends (Zhang and Berhe, 2022). A study conducted by Nielsen's (2014) Global Online Environment and Sustainability disclosed (it surveyed 30,000 respondents in 60 countries), 55 % applicant stated that "willing to pay more for products and services provided from companies that are committed to positive social and environmental impact". In the supermarket shelves are overloaded with the products encouraging green consumption. Frequent terminologies are mentioned in the packaging of the products such as, refillable, 100 % recyclable packaging or number of times product recycled, products free of phosphate's etc, that are associated with the green marketing strategy (Gupta and Acharya, 2019).

Recently, the corporate operating perspective in developing countries has undergone a significant shift as a result of the rising requirement to adopt environmentally friendly practices and particular environmental policies. Businesses might benefit from being aware that, even in difficult circumstances, environmental policies can assist increase corporate

success. Instead, environmental initiatives like sustainability policies are adopted as a component of a company's environmental strategy since it is recognized that environmental problems might present commercial possibilities. As a result, putting green principles into practice can help firms perform better (Zhang and Berhe, 2022).

Public pressure, corporate environmental duty, private corporation, opportunities, and strong rivalry are all significant source of motivation for firms to use green marketing. Apart from addressing consumers' wants and wishes and helping to environmental sustainability, eco-friendly marketing has other advantages for businesses. Environmental marketing allows businesses to gain client trust while enhancing sales growth and profitability. Furthermore, efficient and environmentally friendly marketing boosts overall business growth, which improves the business chances of being a specific deterrent for tax incentives and also aids in client base expansion (Kaviya, S; Priyadarshini, R G. Abhigyan, 2022).

## 2.4 Irish green market

Over the past five years, the green economy has experienced rapid growth on a worldwide scale. This achievement is all the more remarkable in light of the catastrophic global recession of 2008–2009. Ireland has recently established a footprint in this dynamic industry, offering business prospects across many different fields (Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE), 2009). Ireland's economy is on the rise, unemployment is at its lowest level in nine years, and household spending is growing steadily. In the Irish market, food spending is dominated by four categories (meat and chicken, dairy products, fresh vegetables and bread, rice and cereals), which together make up 70% of total household food spending (Fintech solutions, 2021). Organic food sector will grow at the rate of 4.7% in 2022 due to the trend of healthy lifestyle and green consumerism (Fintech solutions, 2021). In Europe, 85% retailers recorded rise in the sales of green products in the past 5 years and 92 percent retailers expect an exponential increase in the environmentally friendly sales in the coming 5 years. (International Trade Centre, 2019).

In the Irish food industry, Irish marketers give immense significance to the food waste management. The waste management of the food is most crucial part in developing green brand image of the product. The most recommended methods of waste management include

prevention, minimization, and reuse of trash at the point of generation because they can save costs for businesses and improve the environment. The draft Food Waste Regulations' implementation, which calls for enterprises to separate food waste at the source, is also crucial (DETE, 2009). Below is the figure which shows waste management preference.

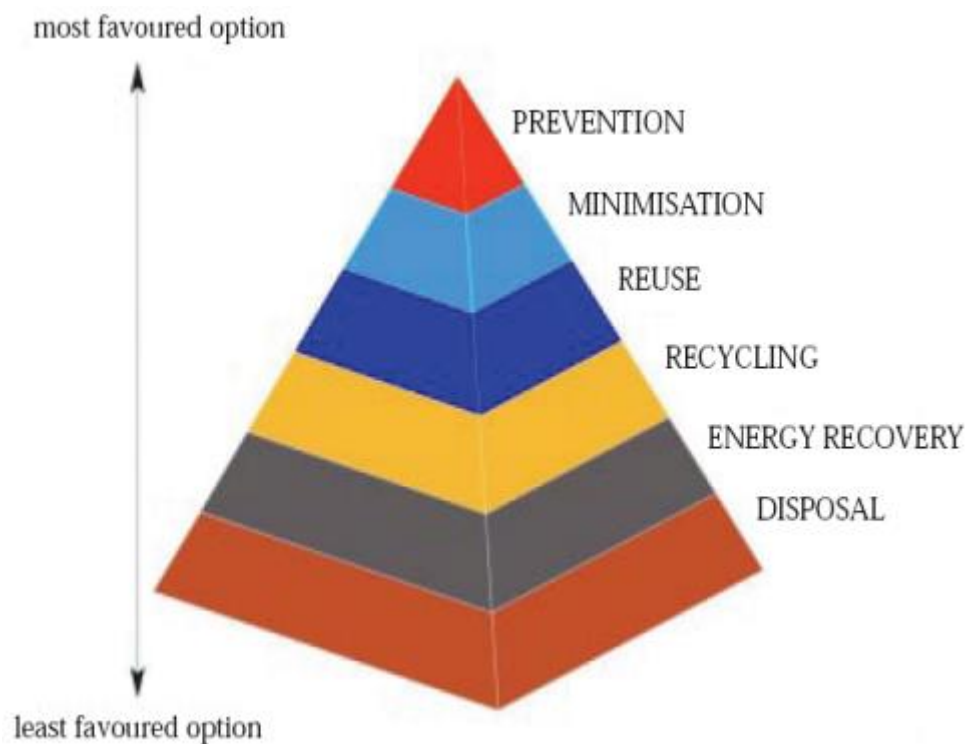


Figure 1: Food Waste Regulations (DETE, 2009).

To summarize, the green food market in Ireland and Europe will continue set to grow in the coming years. There is a tremendous demand for Organic food in Ireland and Irish consumers are willing to pay premium price for it. The Irish government helping in development of value chains in organic food industry and proper waste management of the food in Ireland (Seamus McMenamin, 2021).



## 2.5 Theory of Planned Behaviour

Many consumers are interested in buying eco-friendly items because they are worried about environmental concerns. However, real green product sales are still below expectations. Because of this, green product marketers may need to look at the elements influencing consumer behaviour (Kamalanon, Chen and Li, 2022). Consumer behaviour is a complex subject and what influences the customers decision making process is really difficult to understand. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is one of the important theories that has been used by many academics and researcher to understand green consumer behaviour of the consumer (Morren and Grinstein, 2016). TPB tries to predict the individual behaviour at particular place and time. A person's behaviour is be predicted by three variables: attitude, subjective norms (SN), and perceived behaviour control (PBC) (Ajzen, 1991).

Attitude refers to “the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of the behaviour in question” (Ajzen, 1991, p. #). Green consumer behaviour (GCB) is the result of positive attitude towards environment concluded by many studies (Sun, The and Linton, 2018; Verma and Chandra, 2018; Prakash and Pathak, 2017; Yadav and Pathak, 2016).

The subjective norm is defined as “the perceived social pressure to performer not to perform the behaviour” (Ajzen, 1991, p. 76). Past studies have drawn mixed findings in regard to the influence of SN on GCB (Ajzen, 1991). The Perceived behaviour control is the degree of confidence and easiness an individual feels to achieve a goal. Behaviour Intention is the likelihood of any persons to perform any action (Ajzen, 1991). Therefore, action, SN, BI, PBC all the variables make the desired behaviour of any individual purchasing green product. Therefore, TPB is in favour of taking psychological aspects into account while making self-controlled and socially influenced decisions (Juschten et al., 2019).

Although consumers' attitudes toward green products are improving, the number of green items that are actually purchased is still rather low. For instance, White, Hardisty and Habib, (2019) observed that just 26% of respondents to a recent poll who said they would want to purchase items that promote sustainability actually did so. The "green attitude-behaviour gap" refers to the discrepancy between consumer desires and actual conduct. The aim of this study is to find whether, any discrepancy between consumer attitude also known as green rhetoric. In this research attitude variables of TPB will be taken into consideration, the design of the questions which will be asked to the Ireland's consumers.

## 2.6 Green labelling

Green labels or eco-labels have an immense impact on consumer behaviour towards products because they convey information about consumer's environmental issues and product characteristics. It caters to both marketers and consumers, about product information related to the environment (Brécard, 2017). Eco-labelling helps in developing pro-environmental policy and encouraging behaviour related to use of environmentally friendly products.

Although eco-labelling is beneficial for green marketing, it has created some confusion among consumers to understand the real environmental quality of the product (Harbaugh, Maxwell and Roussillon, 2017). Various literature discusses about the importance of eco-labelling from extraction of raw materials to its disposal. Therefore, green label function is to change the attribute "credit" into the attribute "search" so that people can simply evaluate and make better choices when selecting the goods. Consumers will need this information and utilize it in their purchasing decisions if the value of the extra information outweighs the cost of the inquiry. Of course, it is also presumed that customers are aware of the existence and potential variability of the characteristic "credit" when they express a need for information about it. In other words, customers must understand the value of knowledge before they can demand it (Cohen and Vandenberg, 2012). In order to sell more green products in the supermarket, eco-labelling can be used as an important tool. This study will try to find out, how effective eco-labelling are for influencing consumer to purchase the green products.

## 2.7 Green Products Pricing

According to various research in green market domain, consumers in the marketplace are willing to pay high prices for the green products (Shabbir et al., 2020). Due to the environmental awareness, consumer's get opportunity to invest for the benefit of environment by purchasing green products. Proper well designed pricing strategy with environmental consideration can benefit the long-term profitability of any business (Chen and Sheu, 2009). Some study suggest that price sensitive consumer tends to avoid purchasing green products, in this study, how pricing factors plays a decisive role in green purchasing pattern of the consumer's will be determined.

Consumers' environmental concerns are frequently incorporated in evaluations of brand preference and demand in pricing strategies for green products. Environmental awareness influences customer purchasing decisions and behaviour (Shamdasani, P., Chon-Lin, G.O., Richmond D, 1993). Schuhwerk and Lefkoff-Hagius (1995) investigate the influence of advertising on consumer choice in terms of environmental purchasing habits. Based on laboratory trials, their findings reveal that customers with more environmental awareness do not care if an advertising contains more green components and always prefer ecologically friendly products. According to Ginsberg and Bloom (2004), while dealing with green market-related challenges, researchers and managers must remember that customers do not demand green advantages at the price of original convenience, quality, and other commodity features.

This study seeks to find are generation Y consumer in Ireland are price sensitive or insensitive for green products in their grocery shopping. It is also crucial to find whether the consumer with green attitude or having certain degree of environmental awareness have any past green behaviour and how sensitive they are to the green marketing pricing strategy.

## 2.8 Green Packaging

Up to the past years, research has not been focused primarily on green packaging. Green marketers have not yet looked into green branding in the current economy. However, as consumer knowledge of green packaging has increased in response to growing environmental concerns, consumers' attitudes toward the environment have improved (Swenson, M.R., Wells, 2018). Unique packaging improves branding which have the power to alter consumer perceptions of green products since an effective green posture requires brand uniqueness. Additionally, it has been noted that items lacking in green features have less commercial success (Hartmann, P, Ibáñez, 2018.). Additionally, researchers have found that green packaging is a crucial component for the success of green branding efforts (Swenson, M.R., Wells, 2018). The relevance, behaviour, and characteristics of environmental products have all been the subject of numerous research (Meffert, 1993).

The method of preserving the environment for coming generations is by the use of green packaging. The use of materials and production processes for product packaging has a minimal impact on energy use and the environment. Manufacturers and customers may get rid of the toxins that harm the planet's atmosphere, soil, and seas by adopting this eco-friendly packaging (DETE, 2019).

## 2.9 Green Advertising

Green commercials originally appeared in the late 1960s as a result of consumer activism, public and scientific communities, and others raising concerns about companies engaging in anti-environmental actions (Easterling et al., 1996). Green advertising has declined over the years due to false claims in advertisements, exaggeration in advertisement content, and consumer confusion regarding the terminologies utilized (Polonsky et al., 1997). According to Yin and Ma (2009), green advertising regained pace in the 2000s due to changes in international regulation, global backing, revitalized consumer interest, and so on, ushering in the sustainable era (Belz and Peattie, 2009). Green commercials are those that include environmental sustainability, eco-friendly content, and substances that address the requirements and desires of green consumers.

In contrast, Chase and Smith (1992) discovered that only roughly 70% of respondents were persuaded by green messages from advertising and eco-labelling in their study. According to the same survey, more than half of the respondents did not pay enough attention to green messaging in advertising due to their exploited use, making these advertisements less credible (Chase and Smith, 1992).

## 2.9 Green Gap

Consumers are increasingly willing to adjust their buying habits toward more sustainable practices, and they expect firms to take visible and real steps toward sustainability. Sustainability-related markets are expanding globally, prompting businesses to establish sustainable development procedures in order to capitalize on these opportunities. As a result, for an increasing number of firms, adhering to the three principles of green consumerism, which has become a criterion for firm performance (Cowan and Guzman 2020).

Numerous studies, however, have shown that while consumers have highly positive sentiments about environmental conservation, these good attitudes do not convert into actual purchase patterns (Wiederhold and Martinez 2018). This undesirable circumstance, known as the "green gap," or green rhetoric which makes forecasting future demand for green products challenging. Worse, this condition may deter businesses from investing in environmentally friendly activities because they cannot be guaranteed of eliciting the desired consumer response.

First, in today's fast-paced cultures, time pressure causes consumers to rush their judgments and focus on the most obvious cues, such as marketing and shop layout, which frequently leads to customers overlooking their ethical concerns (N Choidealbha and Lunn 2020). Second, when social stigma is linked with sustainable options, such as vegan or organic food in specific geographic locations, social pressure may impede sustainable choices (Lazaric et al. 2020). Finally, barriers to converting sustainable thoughts into real purchase include the low availability and visibility of sustainable alternatives across brand ranges and retail assortments (Nguyen et al. 2019).

## 2.10 Literature Gaps

The difference between the attitude and behaviour of the consumers, also known as green rhetoric, where consumers have concerns about the environment, but when it actually comes to purchasing of green products, they avoid purchasing it (Johnstone and Tan, 2015). COVID-19 has also changed consumer habits as the pandemic further emphasizes the importance of a healthy lifestyle (Bord Bia: Irish Food Board, 2021). This research does not take COVID-19 into considerations, it is vital to understand the impact of COVID-19 on green marketing.

There is a green rhetoric also referred as gap between green attitude and behaviour of the generation Y consumer which is already discussed in section 2.9 of the literature review. There are various factors behind this gap, and it is very difficult to identify these factors given the time constraint and practicality of the research. This research will find whether there is a gap in consumers in Ireland buying green groceries.

## Chapter 3: Research Questions

### Objective 1: Green perception and attitude

- a) What are the daily activities that you perform which are beneficial for the environment?
- b) What are green products, which type of green products do you buy in grocery shopping?

### Objective 2: Green Marketing strategy

- a) How do you get to know about green product you buy?
- b) What are the prices you pay, are green products expensive?
- c) Do ever packaging of a green product compels you to buy it, do you ever read packaging information?

### Objective 3: Characteristic of a green product

- a) From where do you buy green products and why?
- b) Which product do you consider environmentally friendly? Why?

## Chapter 4: Research Methodology

### 4.1 Introduction

The methodology and techniques used to carry out this research will be addressed in this chapter. It will cover each phase of the "Research onion": Figure 2 from Saunders et al. (2019) depicts the many stages the researcher would experience as they make decisions for their study. As recommended by the authors, the "research onion" will be employed in this chapter as a tool to define the general technique used in this study, beginning from the outer layer and moving to the centre. Considering this, the research methodology will begin with a discussion of the research philosophies, then go on to an examination of methods to theory formation, methodological decisions, tactics, and time horizon, before concluding with the techniques and procedures of the research.

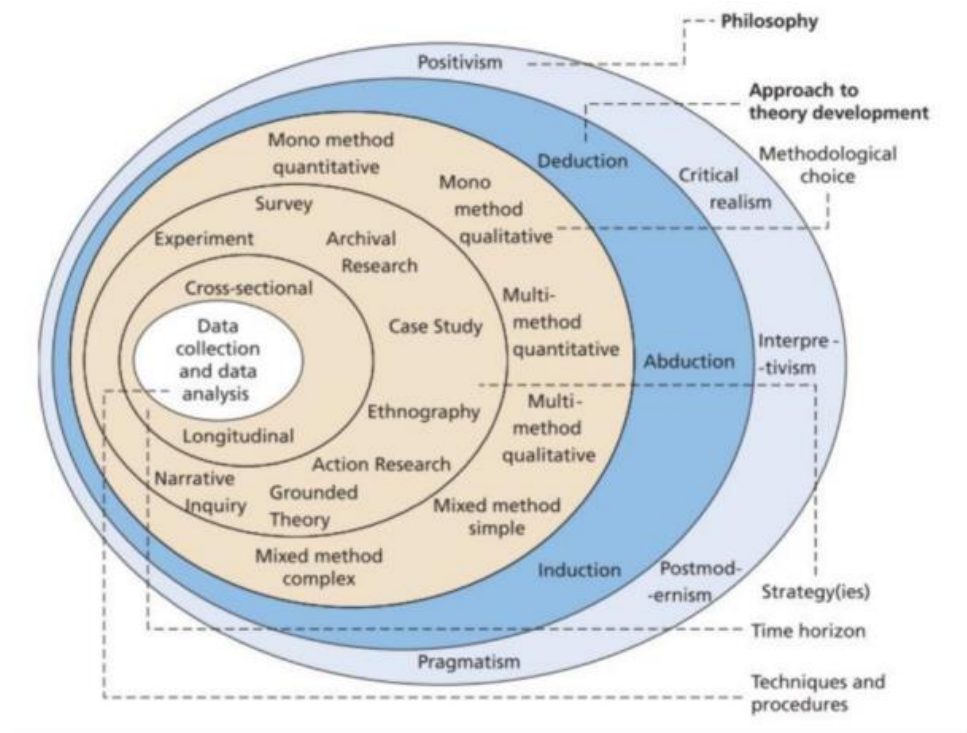


Figure 2: "The Research Onion" (Saunders et al., 2019)

This section seeks to highlight the various methodological techniques and the selected research structure used throughout the research on the impact of green marketing on consumer purchase behaviour. The goal of this research is to find out whether green marketing has any influence on consumer purchase decision. Finally, using the data gathered, the dissertation will look more closely at how consumer behaviour has changed as a result of the desire for green marketing, posing new marketing and consumer engagement issues. The

author will then make suggestions based on empirical data that can be used to raise consumer and organizational understanding of green marketing strategy.

## 4.2 Research Philosophy

An essential first stage in the research process is knowing the philosophy. A research philosophy is a set of beliefs and presumptions that will offer direction on how information about a subject is obtained with the aim of advancing a field of knowledge (Saunders et al., 2016). The first form of assumption is related to the idea of Ontology, whereas the second type is based on the idea of Epistemology. These assumptions affect our comprehension throughout the investigation and so influence the process in different ways.

Ontology is the study of existence, which includes interrogating the nature of reality (Collis and Hussey, 2014) and investigating the nature of humans as individuals. (Awasthy and Gupta, 2015). Epistemology explores what may be acknowledged as knowledge (Collis et al., 2014) and is seen to be necessary when addressing insights on a topic in order to validate assumptions and knowledge (Burrell and Morgan, 2016). An epistemological philosophy was found acceptable for this investigation, with interpretivism used to interpret the data. This philosophy was chosen because the researcher found value in interacting with individuals while attempting to determine what sections of the literature were valid in green marketing in Ireland.

Interpretivist research philosophies are considered in the context of studying green marketing. The reason for choosing interpretivist philosophical approach is that the information in the current study tends to be honest and reliable, so it turns out that the data interpreted by the chosen philosophy is associated with a higher level of validity. It means that. In addition, note that the application of this philosophy is highly dependent on the interests of the researcher and helps maintain the accuracy of the study throughout the data interpretation process. Thus, it can be said that this study may have an interpretive character. Reality is formed via social interactions between the researcher and the study's participants under interpretivism (Bryman, 2016). Qualitative research methodologies are related with interpretivism (Goldkuhl, 2012). Using approaches such as interviews, the researcher can gain an understanding of a participant's point of view (Howson, 2021). This enables the researcher to utilize open-ended questions to discover the participant's opinions and thoughts about a particular subject (DeJonckheere and Vaughn, 2019).

## 4.3 Research Approach and Method

The second layer of the 'research onion' is concerned with deciding which approach will be employed in the research. There are two ways to consider: inductive and deductive. It is critical that the researcher has a good understanding of the many options available and the ability to pick the best one who will be most suited for the research investigation since it will affect future decisions data collection, processing, and interpretation (Crossley et al., 2021).



A deductive method begins with a theory to generate a hypothesis, and then conducts research to confirm or reject the hypothesis (Gratton and Jones, 2009). Deductive method is commonly connected with quantitative research.

Therefore, in this study, as there is limited amount of research done on Irish green market hence from the philosophy of interpretivism, an inductive approach is considered. The inductive approach has proven to be a systematic approach to identify how green marketing is influencing consumers in purchasing groceries in supermarket. Examining inductive study types provides direct knowledge with information from actual observations and real-life experiences shared by the individuals.

#### 4.4 Research design and strategy

According to Saunders et al. (2019), the research design provides an outline of the researcher's plan for answering the study's research question(s). This covers the data collecting process, sample characteristics, and a summary of how the acquired data will be analysed.

The research was carried out using a mono method qualitative design (Saunders and Tosey, 2013). This was chosen since the data will be gathered in an inconsistent manner. The mono aspect signifies the use of only one procedure. Before reaching a conclusion, the qualitative technique allowed the researcher to collect the participants' ideas and generate an opinion by examining the link between theory and reality (Saunders et al. 2012). Qualitative research methods are well-known for their versatility and imagination (Lê and Schmid, 2022).

The researcher decided that an inductive strategy was most suited in this study because the research is building on information that already exists (Ketokivi et al., 2010). This allowed the researcher to adopt an exploratory strategy. The fact that, lack of data specially in the case of Ireland for its green food market, suggest doing the exploratory research.

According to Lederman (see Thomas et al. 1995), a focus group is "a technique involving the use of in-depth group interviews in which participants are selected because they are a purposive, though not necessarily representative, sampling of a specific population, this group being 'focused' on a given topic." Participants in this form of study are chosen since they have something to say on the issue, are within the age range, have similar socio-economic features, and are comfortable talking to the interviewer and each other (Richardson & Rabiee, 2001). Considering the timeline of the proposed research it is very difficult to create a focussed group as it is very difficult for everyone to appear at a particular time.

Therefore, semi structured interview was chosen, as this was practically possible for green marketing study in Ireland. IN order to understand the more understand the consumer driven experience and insights this method was crucial for the research. The best research methodology was determined to be semi-structured research interviews. While it is true that both self-administered questionnaires and interviews can be subject to social desirability bias, it has been argued that when research is performed in an interview situation, the risk of this



happening is reduced (Sandhu, 2012). Though thinking on the interview, the surroundings, and recording the nonverbal communication conveyed by the members of the groups would offer a vital dimension to the production and analysis of data, the major source of data analysis is the recorded spoken language produced from the interview.

#### 4.5 Research sampling

For this research, the sample population target 10 consisting of 5 females and 5 males, aged 18 to 40. The setting of an age limit is explained by the fact that generation Y consumers aged between 18 to 25 years and can be considered as fully economically capable and responsible of their purchasing decisions, which is an important factor to be considered for the reliability of the green marketing study in Ireland.

Interview were conducted from 1st of August to 3rd of August 2022, 5 interviews were conducted online via teams while 5 interviews conduct physically wherever possible for example, homes and cafes. The interview was priorly notified to all the respondents so that it could be conducted without any disruptions. Interviewees were also asked to speak openly on green consumption-related experiences, behaviour, and attitudes. Interviewees were asked to discuss instances when they did not act in accordance with their ethical standards and to explain why. Almost all the interviews were 20 minutes to 30 minutes long.

#### 4.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues in research have developed significantly in recent years (Saunders, 2019). To prevent any ethical difficulties, every researcher ought to take this when gathering information during their study and when ending the research.

Interview participants were informed from the start that their identities would be kept private. This was further re-emphasized throughout the interview, when it was stated that any answers to the interview questions would only be utilized and cited anonymously. They were also informed that the research was part of an MSc research project and that no data gathered will be utilized for any other reason. They were also assured that they could have a copy of the audio recordings and transcripts if they so desired.

#### 4.7 Data Analysis Method

The data analysis followed the interpretivist philosophy and inductive methodology that supports this research endeavour. Thematic analysis, the approach selected, has been described as a "foundational method for qualitative analysis" (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Those

same authors highlight its versatility as one of its key advantages, while also admitting that this flexibility exposes the approach to criticism if clear and precise standards for its implementation are not followed. (Braun & Clarke, 2006) provide six stages of theme analysis that were followed in the study and assessment of the data reported which is explained below.

**1. Become familiar with the data**

Initial step is reading and reading the information gathered from the interview transcripts.

**2. Generate initial codes**

During this stage, we begin to organize our data in a meaningful and methodical manner.

Coding breaks down large amounts of data into little morsels of meaning. There are several methods for coding, and the approach you use will be decided by your perspective and research topics.

**3. Search for themes**

A theme is a pattern that highlights something important or intriguing about the data and/or study topic. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), there are no hard and fast guidelines on what constitutes a theme. The relevance of a topic defines it. If you have a very tiny data collection (e.g., one brief focus group), the coding step and this stage of finding early themes may overlap significantly.

**4. Review themes**

Evaluating to see if the themes work with the coded extracts and the complete data set and creating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.

**5. Define themes**

The goal of this final iteration of the themes is to determine the "essence" of what each theme is all about. p. 92 of Braun & Clarke's 2006 book

**6. Writing the report**

The very last possibility for analysis. Selection of vivid, engaging extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, tying back to the research topic and literature, and production of an academic paper on the analysis

## Chapter 5: Analysis and Findings

### 5.1 Introduction

This study seeks to understand whether green marketing influences consumer purchasing decision in grocery shopping in Ireland. There are various factors which is discussed in the previous sections of the study, an extensive examination of the research findings gathered through semi-structured interviews is provided in this chapter. The data analysis will be based on thematic analysis to derive the conclusion.

### 5.2 Data Analysis

The initial step in data analysis is to integrate the responses from individual interviews into Microsoft word and colour code the data based on research objective and questions. Thematic analysis is used to analyse the coded data. During the data collection phase of the research, a maximum of 10 individuals were interviewed. Of the total number of interviewees, 5 were males and 5 females, all the participants were in the age group of 25 to 40 years.

#### 5.1 Research objective 1: Green perception and attitude

The first objective is to find whether individual environmental concerns benefit green marketing, to understand each participants perception of a green product. The objective was to understand consumers ethical behaviour and consumer attitude matches with the actions of buying green products. As discussed in section 2 of the literature review theory of planned behaviour attitude variable was taken into consideration while designing the questionnaire.

##### 5.1.1 Research sub-question 1

What are the daily activities that you perform which are beneficial for the environment?

The research interview participants were asked about to describe their daily ethical behaviour to understand their green attitude. 6 respondents mentioned their daily ethical behaviour such as consuming electricity and water efficiently. Two participants mentioned the use of public transport and walking in order to save carbon emissions in the environment. 2 interviewees were confused about whether his daily activities benefit the environment.

Analysis of interview data mainly led to the generation of two themes.

Major theme 1

Green Attitude: Majority of the participants are environmentally conscious to some extent and believe that their daily activities help environment in positive way.

#### Minor theme 2

Couldn't identify themselves ethical: Few participants believe that minor activities like using resources adequately does not have much impact on environment.

Major theme 1: In this conversation respondents regarded themselves as ethical green behaviour and they were committed to the environment, though this commitment varied from participants to participants. The consumer showed their green attitudes and concerns for the environment, some of the quotes are mentioned below from the interviews.

"I would probably say rather than drive into office, I prefer to take public transport, which to some degree you probably lessen the amounts of carbon emissions emitted by me. Also, I suppose I'd say I'd take lessen the use of public transports and walk more if the distance is manageable." (Interviewee 5, male)

"I try to minimize the electricity usage, you know during daytime I don't switch on the lights, I prefer to use natural light by window. The natural light is good for your eyesight and reduces the unnecessary wastage of electricity." (Interviewee 8, female)

#### Minor theme 2:

In this conversation respondents tried to convey that these daily activities don't have much impact on the environment unless the pro-environment steps are taken at the government level or there is involvement of the masses. Their green attitudes were in doubts, and they didn't give much importance to the individual green consumer participation, the following are some quotes from the minor theme 2

"Although I respect the use resources, I don't think so individual activities will be that beneficial for the environment, unless government changes their policies against climate change. The steps taken at higher level have much more significance than at the bottom level." (Interviewee 9, female)

"To be precise, whether it helps your research, I do basic things like not using water when it's not required but I don't think so this would help in climate change or some other danger aspects of it. I think its civic sense, but we need changes abide by the developed nations across the world." (Interviewee 3, male)

### 5.1.2 Research sub-question 2

What are green products, which type of green products do you buy in grocery shopping?

The respondent consumers were asked to provide their personal perspectives on the green products to better understand what they meant when they talked about them. Almost all the interviewees (n = 10) who were asked about green products, have defined it as having a lower negative influence on human health, being organic and environmentally friendly, or having the advantage of being simple to reuse and recycle. The focus of 7 respondents is on recyclable materials used in packaging of the grocery was of major concern.

The interviewees were even asked about which type of green products they buy in grocery shopping to understand, the mismatch between consumer attitude and actual green buying behaviour. It is also known as green rhetoric which is already mentioned in the literature review of the study. Around 8 respondents, which of them shown green behaviour earlier, 3 of them actually bought green products in their grocery purchase, 3 of the participants were more health conscious and bought organic products while showing green attitude earlier. While 2 participants didn't show green consumer behaviour but willingness that they will buy products which can be easily recycled, which was hypothetical. The following are the quotes from the research sub-question 2.

Minor theme 1: Matched green attitude and actual green consumer behaviour.

Minor theme 2: Mismatch in the green attitude and actual green consumer behaviour.

Minor theme 3: non-green attitude willingness to buy green products.

Minor theme 1:

In this conversation the consumer explained that they actually buy green products with valid reason such as buying vegetable and fruits without any plastic packaging. Consumer which had shown green attitude matched their green behaviour buying green products. Following are the quotes from the conversation.

“I like to buy vegetable or stuff from the supermarket which are not packed specially with plastic you know rather I buy from open markets. In Ireland it is unnecessary to pack fruits and vegetables, I would say and very less option to buy loose fruits and vegetable in supermarket.” (Interviewee 8, female)

“I would probably say there are certain products that are received or at least shown to be more environmentally friendlier comparison to products that could be damaging environments.” (Interviewee 1, Female)

“I buy products which container can be easily recused by storing my personal stuff, for example glass containers are best package materials which could be used. If I don’t need, I throw them to the nearest bottle bank, and it could be easily recycled.” (Interviewee 10 male)

#### Minor theme 2:

In this interview conversation respondents explained that they have green attitude but mixed that with health conscious buying or not by green products by some of the other behaviour which will be discussed in the following data analysis. Below are few quotes from the interview.

“I would buy soy milk or vegan milk which is good for health as it contains low fat, and the manufacturing companies use tetra pack which is easily recyclable. The free-range eggs that would be more kind of greener products I buy or close enough to green products to be organic variety and milk and maybe coconut milk.” (Interviewee 5, male)

#### Minor theme 3:

These respondents in the interview neither shown any interest at individual level for green attitude nor were in the favour of it, they gave more importance to the government policies at the higher level.

“I will definitely buy green products, actually everyone should buy green products that can only be happen if the decision makers make some policy regarding it, without that you won’t see any changes practically in real life such as dealing with climate change.” (Interviewee 9, Female)

### 5.1.3 Findings from research objective 1

According to Theory of planned behaviour discussed in the 2.5 section of the literature review, a person’s behaviour is be predicted by three variables: attitude, subjective norms (SN), and perceived behaviour control (PBC) (Ajzen 1991). In this research objective we analysed the attitude variable and found that consumers which have more environmental concerns are likely to show green behaviour. 4 out 7 respondents in the interview shown match in green behaviour and attitude.

However, there is evidence of “green-gap” or green rhetoric which is discussed in 2.9 section of the literature review. Numerous studies, however, have shown that while consumers have highly positive sentiments about environmental conservation, these good attitudes do not convert into actual purchase patterns (Wiederhold and Martinez 2018). 3 out 7 interviewees which have shown green attitude, were either confused about their past green

behaviour with health-conscious spending or created some hypothetical future predictions of buying green products.

## 5.2 Research Objective 2: Green Marketing strategy

The second research objective is to find whether, the green marketing strategies applied by the companies in Ireland has any advantage for the consumers to influence their decision for buying green products in the grocery shopping. The aim of the sub-questions in this objective is to seek how the consumers in Ireland get information of green products whether it is advertising or brand promotions or any other channels. To know whether green packaging and green labelling have any effect in green consumer behaviour. Finally, the important factor of green consumerism, which pricing strategy will best suit for green marketing are consumer in Ireland price sensitive or they are willing to pay premium prices for green products.

### 5.2.1 Research sub-question 1

How do you get to know about green product you buy?

In this research sub-question, the study seeks to understand are green products advertisements worth spending company's budget. None of the respondents mentioned that they bought any green product by watching or reading any advertisement on television or newspaper. One participant said that she bought green products several times by looking and reading an advertisement inside the supermarkets mainly near the substitute of non-green products.

Analysis of interview data mainly led to the generation of a following theme.

Minor theme 1:

The advertisement of a green product should be convincing the consumers and it should be near to the shelves of the substitute products, below is the quote for minor theme 1

“I buy green products not that frequently, once I was buying shampoo and there was advertisement in just adjacent shelves to every product you buy of Mama Earth brand, we will plant one tree which you can even track by the tracking number printed on the package of the shampoo.” (Interviewee 8, Female)

### 5.2.2 Research sub-question 2

What are the prices you pay, are green products expensive?

The research conversation is about to understand pricing strategy of the green marketing for grocery segment in Ireland. What consumers in the market are willing to pay for environmentally friendly products, two themes emerged in this discussion. Firstly, 8 out of 10 respondents are willing to pay marginal extra price compared to the non-green substitute. Secondly, 2 out of 10 respondents are willing to pay premium prices for the eco-friendly products in their grocery shopping in Ireland.

Major theme 1: Consumers willing to pay marginal extra price for green products.

Minor theme 2: Consumers willing to pay premium prices for the green products.

Major theme 1:

In this conversation the participant consumers were asked whether they find green products expensive and what prices they pay for a particular green grocery product which they buy in Ireland. 80 % of the interviewee said that they can buy green products rather than buying their substitute which is not beneficial for the environment, but the pricing factor should have marginal difference. Below are the quotes from the interviews.

“Some time in the Supermarket I see the prices the green products are very expensive compared to general products, although the material used in packaging is recyclable then why it is too expensive. I will never buy a green product for which I will have to burn a hole in my pocket.” (Interviewee 1, Female)

“I can buy green products but the prices I pay should not burn a hole in my pocket, I would be happy to pay little bit extra because my bit will save environment.” (Interviewee 10, male)

Minor theme 2:

In this conversation the respondents which shown strong green attitude and strong behaviour which were total 3 out of 10 interviewees as discussed in the earlier theme. Therefore, 2 members out of 3 agreed that they would pay premium price as the quality of the green product is high compared to the normal products and they can be recycled easily. Following is the quote from the interview conversation.

“I would pay more for the green products provided it shouldn't contain any un-healthy composition. The fact of the matter is green products are obviously organic and environmentally friendly.” (Interviewee 8, Female)



### 5.2.3 Research sub-question 3

Do ever packaging of a green product compels you to buy it, do you ever read packaging information?

The research conversation is to understand green labelling and packaging strategy of the grocery companies in Ireland. In this conversation participants were asked whether they are compelled to buy green products by looking at the packaging of the green products or whether they read information and check green labels printed on the packets. In this conversation a major theme emerged 6 out of 8 respondents informed that they read information on the packaging before buying the products. 2 out of 8 participants said if packaging is good and attractive it definitely hijacks their purchasing decision.

Major theme 1: Green labels and information matters most in purchasing decision.

Minor theme 2: Good green packaging influences purchase decision.

Major theme 1:

In this conversation respondents explained that the green labelling and relevant information is vital, and they make their purchase decision after reading the information in the package and looking at the labels as it let consumers know whether the product is certified from green certification agency. Following are the quotes from the research.

“Yeah, I think majority of the people especially in Ireland they want to know what they are consuming. I do read packaging information and check if they are certified which tells me whether the product is authentic green product or not.” (Interviewee 4, male)

Minor theme 2:

In this conversation the respondents were not concerned about the green labelling and information of the green package, but they were more interested on the attractiveness of the green packaging. Below is the quote from the conversation from the interview.

“Say for curiosities like would check them, but that'll be only more for a very new product it was, and in terms of its I suppose visual package chain I was probably say there's some degree is probably would compelling to buy more, especially if it's attractive.” (Interviewee 5, male)

### 5.2.4 Findings from research objective 2

In this objective study seeks to find whether green marketing strategies such as advertisement, prices, green packaging and green labelling have any influence on the consumer purchase decision of Ireland. Green advertising has declined over the years due to false claims in advertisements, exaggeration in advertisement content, and consumer confusion regarding the terminologies utilized (Polonsky et al., 1997). The study found that green advertisement is not effective unless it is done inside the supermarket, where consumers go for shopping. Few interviewees were influenced by looking at advertisement near the shelves of the non-green substitute products are placed.

Pricing is the most crucial part of any marketing campaign as discussed in the section 2.7 of the literature review, and study found that green marketing will be successful if there is marginal difference between green products and their non-green substitute products.

Green labelling and green packaging as discussed in the section 2.6 and 2.7 of the literature review, study found that green labelling was more influential in making consumer purchase decisions than green packaging as customers are keener on looking at the eco-labels for knowing whether the product is really green.

### 5.3 Research Objective 3: Characteristic of a green product

In this objective study seeks to find the impression of green product in the mind of consumers in Irish supermarket. Firstly, research seeks to find whether consumers in Ireland choose any specific supermarket for buying green products in grocery shopping. Secondly, as there are various stages involved in the manufacturing of a green product from raw materials collection, manufacturing process, logistics and waste management, so what does consumer think which product can be called green product in Irish market.

#### 5.3.1 Research sub-question 1

From where do you buy green products and why?

In this conversation with the respondents the study seeks to find whether there is importance of any specific supermarket for green products in Ireland. However, only single theme emerged in this sub-question where all the participants said that there is no specific supermarket from where they buy green products in the grocery shopping, they generally buy from any supermarket where they do weekly grocery shopping.

Major theme 1: No specific supermarket

Major theme 1:

Respondents while answering this research question explained that the Supermarket or any particular shopping destination doesn't seem to be an important variable in this study. Following are the quotes from the interview.

“Oh, I'll be honest, I wouldn't say I go to a specialized supermarket. I Morris, go to my local one.” (Interviewee 5, male)

“I usually don't buy from any specific supermarket like whatever supermarkets I usually we have in Ireland. I just do shopping from there, for example I usually do my grocery shopping from Tesco, SuperValu. So yeah, whatever the green products, I have bought so far are from these supermarkets, not any particular supermarket I've go for it.” (Interviewee 8, female)

“To be precise you know, to the best of my knowledge there are no specific green products shops in Ireland, and usually I buy from the supermarket, which is near to my residence, for my convenience.” (Interviewee 7, female)

### 5.3.2 Research sub-question 2

Which product do you consider environmentally friendly? Why?

In this sub-question the study seeks to find which characteristics the consumers in Ireland, consider the most critical for a product to be eco-friendly. The respondents were given insights of different process involved in the manufacturing of a green product, and which process or variable they consider the most important characteristic of a green product. So mainly one major theme emerged by analysing the data of the interview for this sub-question. 4 out of 6 respondents buying green products said that they consider the waste-management of the end-product the most critical.

Major theme 1: Recycling / Waste management most critical.

Major theme 1:

In this conversation the participants explained that they consider the waste management part of any green product as the most important. It is observed that the information such as “100 % recyclable”, or “Refillable” attracts consumer to buy green products. Below are the quotes form the interview for this sub-question.

“I would definitely check the packaging most importantly whether it indicates proper disposal of it and at the same time of the food, depending on what it's made from an all, will definitely come to mind. I suppose one thing that I would check on the package be the location of

where the product came from, because obviously when you're importing exporting foods to different countries, obviously, it's going to be done by either by ship or plane. More the product travel more carbon footprints it leaves in the environment. “(Interviewee 2, Female)

“I will buy the product by looking at the packaging, I will simply avoid one-time plastic products. I think recyclable or reusable products must be adopted by the people in Ireland.” (Interviewee 5, Female)

### 5.3.3 Findings from research objective 3

In this objective study seeks to find, that what impression does the generation y consumer in Ireland have about green products and is there importance of any brand value of supermarket in Ireland. Chai (1996) defined green consumerism as the products purchased by the consumers that cause minimal pollution and harm to the environment. However, study found that the immense importance to the recycling of the green product were given by majority of the interviewees. With regarding to the significance of supermarket in buying the green products, none of the respondents regarded it as crucial for buying green product groceries.

## Chapter 6 Discussion

In this chapter, the findings from the preceding chapter are thoroughly examined, explained, and placed within the framework of the existing research. The various variables involved in the study to find factors influencing consumer purchase decision in Ireland related to grocery shopping is analysed and mentioned in this section.

### 6.1 Green attitude builds green behaviour

Mostly all the generation Y interviewees claimed that they support green consumption to some degree. Without any probing, each of them was able to discuss moral concerns that they had. However, it became clear from the interview data that there were differences in the intensity of the green consumption attitudes among the interviewees. When questioned about specific previous behaviours, two of the interviewees who stated that they currently did not purchase in accordance with their green held opinions tended to fall back on talking about future goals or hypothetical situations. The majority of interviewees who were asked to define "green products" said they were those that had a little impact on human health, were natural and ecologically friendly, or had the benefit of being easy to reuse and recycle. The main motive of this objective was to understand consumers ethical behaviour and consumer attitude matches with the actions of buying green products. There was variance in the green attitude of the participants except few individuals which considered the role of governance in designing the sustainable policies as the most important.

The interviews gave rise to a strong impression that having a truly green behaviour needs a significant amount of deliberate commitment. Attitude refers to "the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of the behaviour in question" (Ajzen, 1991). Green consumer behaviour (GCB) is the result of positive attitude towards environment concluded by many studies (Prakash and Pathak, 2017; Sun et al., 2018; Verma and Chandra, 2018; Yadav and Pathak, 2016). 4 out of 7 interviewees match their green behaviour and green attitude. Therefore, in accordance with the literature discussed in the research the more the degree of awareness and green attitude the consumer has the higher buying tendency of green groceries will be there. It was also apparent that the individual's levels of commitment differed. Interviewee No. 2 was without a doubt the most moral of the eight participants in the study, both in terms of her attitudes and her actual consuming habits. During our talk, it became apparent how consciously interested she has grown in the concept of ethical consumption from her parents. She was even showing that she is aware of the current infrastructure development in the field of green consumption and sustainability.

“I avoid consumption of grocery products which are single use, I even try to buy big containers made from glasses which I can use for storing food, this is simple thing and I have learnt from my friend”

Green product is also referred as the product that incorporates the strategies in recycling or with recycled content, reduced packaging or using least toxic materials to reduce the impact on the natural environment (Elkington and Wasik 1996). Mostly all the respondents in the interview were clear about the concept of green products. Majority of them shown green attitude and even explained the importance of green consumerism.

## 6.2 Existence of green gap

The green attitude shown by some of the respondents did match with the behaviour, 3 of the participants out of 10, did not matched the green attitude and behaviour. These participants were showing green attitude but failed to show actual green behaviour, therefore there is an element of green rhetoric which can be studied in the future research. Numerous studies, however, have shown that while consumers have highly positive sentiments about environmental conservation, these good attitudes do not convert into actual purchase patterns (Wiederhold and Martinez 2018). Most of the interviewee who shown green attitude were focussed on the waste management of the grocery product, almost everyone was against the use of plastic packing material. Hence it is found that there is existence of green rhetoric in the generation Y consumers of Ireland and there are various barriers to it.

Barriers to converting sustainable thoughts into real purchase include the low availability and visibility of sustainable alternatives across brand ranges and retail assortments (Nguyen et al. 2019). The findings from this study can be taken as a base and future research can be done to find these barriers in Ireland’s green market.

## 6.3 Green advertisement is less effective

According to the findings green advertisement in Ireland is less significant and consumers doesn’t get influenced by it. As stated in the literature review, green advertising has declined over the years due to false claims in advertisements, exaggeration in advertisement content, and consumer confusion regarding the terminologies utilized (Polonsky et al., 1997). According to Yin and Ma (2009), green advertising regained pace in the 2000s due to changes in international regulation, global backing, revitalized consumer interest, and so on, ushering in the sustainable era (Belz and Peattie, 2009). Hence majority of the interviewee referred that they get to know about green products by discovering them while shopping in supermarket. One participant from the interview said that she got influenced by the poster

just beside the non-green substitute of the product. So green advertisement can be used in green marketing strategy, but it will be effective in the premises of the supermarket where there are substitute green products.

#### 6.4 Price sensitive green market in Ireland

Green consumers in Ireland are price sensitive. Almost all the interviewee who shown green behaviour were in favour of buying green products in their grocery shopping, but the price should be marginal higher compared to their non-green available substitute products. According to the literature discussed in the literature review of this study, some academicians stated that consumers in the marketplace are willing to pay high prices for the green products (Shabbir et al., 2020). While some researchers believe, some study suggest that price sensitive consumer tends to avoid purchasing green products, in this study, how pricing factors plays a decisive role in green purchasing pattern of the consumer's will be determined. The price strategy for the green marketing plan combines sensitivity and market study. The cost is the primary determinant of whether a buyer chooses to buy a green product (Fan and Zhang, 2011).

However, according to the findings generation Y consumers in Ireland are not willing to pay premium prices for the green products. Hence marketers in Ireland are recommended to design a pricing strategy in which green products doesn't costs too high compared it non-green products.

#### 6.5 Green labelling has more significance than green packaging

According to the findings green packaging and green packaging are important variables in green marketing, but green labelling has more significance among the consumers in Ireland. Most of the interviewees stated that by looking at the labels they get a feeling of trust that the product is eco-friendly. In accordance with the literature discussed in the literature review, green labels or eco-labels have an immense impact on consumer behaviour towards products because they convey information about consumer's environmental issues and product characteristics. It caters to both marketers and consumers, about product information related to the environment. (Brécard, D. ,2017). Eco-labelling helps in developing pro-environmental policy and encouraging behaviour related to use of environmentally friendly products.

#### 6.6 Recycling is a crucial trait of green products in Ireland

According to the findings form the interview data almost all the consumers who are buying greengroceries considered recycling as the crucial trait of any product to come in green category. In accordance with the literature, green product is also referred as the product that incorporates the strategies in recycling or with recycled content, reduced packaging or using

least toxic materials to reduce the impact on the natural environment (Elkington and Wasik 1996).

However, in the interviews at some instant, the contestants were explained about various stages of green products from gathering raw materials to final product stages. Consumers regarded waste-management as the most important trait, this could be because of unawareness of the consumers. There should be more green awareness created among the consumers in Ireland about green consumerism.



## Chapter 7: Conclusion and recommendations

### 7.1 Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to find whether green marketing influences the generation Y consumer buying decision in Ireland buying groceries. There were various factors on which research objective were designed such as consumers green perception and attitude, green marketing strategy and characteristics of a green product. According to the findings of the research, it is observed that each objective has been able to be accomplished and the research aim has been successfully achieved.

A qualitative methodology was used to accomplish this research. Semi-structured interviews were done using a comfort and purpose-based sample, allowing for a wide range of insights.

The first objective findings shows that green attitude is the primary motivators for green products consumption in Ireland. There is variance in the degree of green attitude among the consumers, but the eco-friendly knowledge and green attitude is influencing consumers to buy green products. However, there is existence of a “green gap” among the consumers in Ireland. This gap may be due to various factors which is not studied in this research due to the time constraint of the research.

The second objective findings shows that green advertisement is less effective and most of the green products are discovered while shopping by the consumers. Hence it is recommended to the marketers in Ireland, the green products promotions inside the supermarket are more effective than doing internet or television advertisement.

Effective pricing of the green products is immensely important in green marketing strategy in Ireland. Green consumers in Ireland are price sensitive and they do compare the green products prices with the non-green substitute.

Green labelling and green packaging have importance in green marketing. Generation Y consumers in Ireland tends to read information in the packaging and they authenticate green products by looking at the labels. Marketers in the Ireland can use findings from this research and are recommended to put effective green labels on the green products.

In the third objective, findings revealed that recycling is considered as the most crucial trait of a green product by generation Y consumers in Ireland. Marketers are recommended to use lucrative words such as “100 % recyclable” and “100% refillable” and avoid plastic packaging. It is advised that don't print false information on the package of the green products which might give negative impression about the brand.

Therefore, based on the findings of the research marketers can design the appropriate green marketing strategy for grocery products in Ireland.

## 7.2 Future recommendation and limitation

This research study has found certain concerns that merit further investigation. Because this was qualitative research with a limited sample size, the conclusions cannot be extended to the total Irish consumers. As a result, the external validity of the study might be improved by doing a comparable study with a bigger sample size to see if the findings are duplicated. This study examined customer's attitudes can influence green behaviour towards buying green groceries product in Ireland.

However, it is recommended for the future research to take into account, the difference between the attitude and behaviour of the consumers, also known as green rhetoric, where consumers have concerns about the environment, but when it actually comes to purchasing of green products, they avoid purchasing it (Johnstone & Tan, 2015). This green gap has various barriers on which future research can be conducted by considering the findings of this study. COVID-19 has also changed consumer habits as the pandemic further emphasizes the importance of a healthy lifestyle (Irish food board, 2021). This research doesn't take COVID-19 into considerations, it is vital to understand the impact of COVID-19 on green marketing.

## Appendix: Research Interview sample

Research Interview

0:0:0.0 --> 0:0:0.490

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

OK.

0:0:4.620 --> 0:0:4.930

Guest

Yeah.

0:0:1.390 --> 0:0:11.890

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

So I will start with my questions. So my first question is what are the daily activities that you perform which are beneficial for the environment?

0:0:13.320 --> 0:0:15.50

Guest

Which are better sorting environments?

0:0:15.230 --> 0:0:18.240

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

Like normal activities, whatever you can say.

0:0:18.830 --> 0:0:20.0

Guest

There were activities.

0:0:20.580 --> 0:0:50.560

Guest

Uh, well, I have to say I wanna. I won't necessarily sure this is necessary to eat the most environmentally friendly, but I would probably say that's a rather than drive into college and all. I prefer to take public transport, which to some degree you probably lessens the amounts of carbon emissions submitted from me and like driving. Also, I suppose I'd say I'd take more blood transports and that for to walk more in comparison or even use.

0:0:50.650 --> 0:0:50.900

Guest

With the.

0:0:51.840 --> 0:0:53.870

Guest

Muscling comparison to Dryden.

0:0:55.200 --> 0:0:56.570

Guest

Many example license yet.

0:0:59.440 --> 0:0:59.830

Guest

But.

0:1:2.40 --> 0:1:16.360

Guest

And I suppose to some degree I used to my mother regarding now. So I suppose that in a way would be more for us post more naturalise be more of a.

0:1:17.600 --> 0:1:20.960

Guest

It'll be more somewhat more finely friendlier comparison to.

0:1:22.50 --> 0:1:30.950

Guest

You other activities like I suppose you know like just driving a lot around. So yeah, Sotos that's just the basic idea, I mean already.

0:1:31.570 --> 0:1:33.10

Guest

But for now it's just, you know.

0:1:34.730 --> 0:1:35.660

Guest

It's working all.

0:1:35.200 --> 0:1:54.140

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

OK. Yeah, that was nice. So thanks for answering this question. Now I'll go move forward on second question. So according to you, what are green products and which type of green products do you buy in grocery shopping?

0:1:56.600 --> 0:2:2.620

Guest

I suppose that to, say green products, I don't know the exact definition, but if I had to describe.

0:2:3.610 --> 0:2:9.940

Guest

If it's my own words, I would probably say there are certain products that are received or at least.

0:2:10.30 --> 0:2:32.840

Guest

And shown to be more environmentally friendlier comparison to products that could be could be damaging environments. So I suppose some degrees this could be the productions of certain meats and all, which you know, because one of The thing is because when we were getting from our relations like cat or our animals like cows that emit life into the into the.

0:2:33.790 --> 0:2:40.320

Guest

There at all, which of course is, you know, more worse than even carbon dioxide in the air. Now it's a generalization of its but.

0:2:41.770 --> 0:2:46.30

Guest

Though if I have to say someone more greener products.

0:2:46.110 --> 0:2:56.160

Guest

Umm, I'm not sure whether it's in the RP a greener product, but it is somewhat more organic would be like milk anala buy more.

0:2:57.200 --> 0:3:6.80

Guest

No country for idea milks and soy. The free range eggs, eggs. Nothing. Chickens. Now again, it was unnecessarily green or green in comparison to maybe something like.

0:3:8.190 --> 0:3:8.610

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

Yeah.

0:3:7.830 --> 0:3:19.960

Guest

Coconut milk, although their house being ohh even coconut milk and almond milk have been shown to, you know, not necessarily the most environmentally friendly eat or because of the amount of water is required for them. But I suppose if.

0:3:20.650 --> 0:3:30.160

Guest

The some of the groups say that would be more kind of greener products I buy or close enough to green products to be organic variety and milk and maybe coconut milk.

0:3:32.790 --> 0:3:44.880

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

OK, so OK, so you buy organic milk and other like coconut or whatever, like right coconut milk or yeah.

0:3:43.720 --> 0:3:45.660

Guest

Yeah, yeah. Go look, look. Yeah.

0:3:46.170 --> 0:3:48.740

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

Yeah. OK. So.

0:3:49.980 --> 0:3:52.610

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

The next question is.

0:3:54.360 --> 0:4:11.540

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

OK, so how do you get to know about green product? You buy like what? How from where do you get information that this product is green like that? Do you see any promotions, any advertisement, anything, anything you can say like from where you?

0:4:12.750 --> 0:4:38.860

Guest

Well, for certain products there would be, you would see Siri like indications, whether or not it probably is green or more environmentally friendly based off the packaging. Now of course, you do have to be kind of careful because sometimes these can be used as promotions and offered Eastern products. But again, you know there is some strict limitations to what you can say. So I suppose my information would be on the packaging and.

0:4:39.20 --> 0:4:45.810

Guest

But to go more into depth in general of a certain product, I would, you know, try to get certain, you know papers on.

0:4:46.890 --> 0:4:55.580

Guest

And see you or even certain research to see whether or not are they more inviting friends, as they say they are because you know, obviously we can grab a certain things. You know we can say.

0:4:56.510 --> 0:5:14.320

Guest

And this is more better for you than next few years, we say. Ohh notice actually worse for you. This is better for you. You know, it's kind of like back and forth, certain issues. So I'd say for for the most part though would just be the packing gene. And then if I want to know more why I suppose I'll look at the research behind that's.

0:5:24.650 --> 0:5:24.840

Guest

Yeah.

0:5:15.360 --> 0:5:31.380

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

OK, that's nice, pretty nice answers. So. So I'll move on my next question. So what are the prices you pay for a green product and do you think a green products expensive?

0:5:34.670 --> 0:5:47.520

Guest

Well, I'd say definitely by nowadays. You know, a lot of problems have, you know, written over the years. And I would definitely say that it really depends on how well you plan it and how well.

0:5:48.340 --> 0:5:59.870

Guest

Ohh you tried to preserve, or at least you know, keeping your fridge for as long as you can, you

know, cause obviously some people will happen, specially in Ireland is that we are one of the biggest food wasters and all we do tend to.

0:6:1.40 --> 0:6:1.450

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak  
Yeah.

0:6:0.890 --> 0:6:19.750

Guest

Sleeping in the fridge and then the next. You like, you know, they say even weeks and all we just, you know, throw it out. And for our and using his leftovers and all. So I was to play his most of it is the planning stage and then in terms of the actual price in itself like the company Millwoods gets would be.

0:6:21.400 --> 0:6:50.980

Guest

Around 2:50 per litre, which you know is, I suppose it's something three, a little bit expensive away, especially one there is, you know, certain milk soon and art and so shop that I work and you know the you can get new to league of milk for for around that price as well so at more quantity like around two of the user smells so definitely say that on the tags themselves they depending on what you're buying it could be more expensive but then again it also depends on how well you.

0:6:51.70 --> 0:6:57.610

Guest

Your service, you know. Can you keep it for as long as you can until eventually you do have to go out and you and maybe you can use what's leftover snow for next day.

0:6:58.920 --> 0:6:59.460

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak  
OK.

0:7:0.820 --> 0:7:3.270

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak  
There's nice so.

0:7:4.160 --> 0:7:5.650

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak  
My next question is then.

0:7:6.780 --> 0:7:18.360

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

Do you ever do ever packaging of a green product compels you to buy it? Do you ever read packaging information in a green product which you buy?

0:7:22.750 --> 0:7:32.510

Guest

I suppose singing curiosities do sometimes read them like I suppose, Emmanuel, how much time I have in the store? Like what? Or not my body seemed very quickly. Or if it's something new, I would be.

0:7:33.340 --> 0:7:47.650

Guest

Kind of interested, even if just to, you know, the nutritional value of the food. Do you know the amount of carbs or whether or not that carbs is, you know, sugars or not or even in sugar will say polysaccharides and all? So I would.

0:7:48.870 --> 0:8:7.890

Guest

Say for curiosities like would check them, but that'll be only more for a very new product it was, and in terms of it's I suppose visual package chain I was probably say there's some degree is probably would compelling to buy more, especially if it's a store.

0:8:8.820 --> 0:8:16.640

Guest

And one of those I could potentially be more inclined for that because yes, especially in Ireland, you know the store brands do tend to be.

0:8:17.350 --> 0:8:29.930

Guest

On average, cheaper. And now again, that's just generalization of its, but I definitely say Billy visuals do definitely have to some degree in general, more of an impact. And then personally there will be nutritional values will sometimes come to mine as well.

0:8:33.420 --> 0:8:34.690

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

OK so.

0:8:36.470 --> 0:8:42.290

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

And do you see any like environmental friendly factors written on the package?

0:8:46.0 --> 0:8:48.280

Guest

And in terms of environment, he friendly.

0:8:46.690 --> 0:8:56.200

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

Like a recyclable or certain things like that, do you compel by this kind of information to buy their product?

0:8:57.260 --> 0:9:3.70

Guest

Definitely yes. And I didn't say the same for non for even for I suppose.

0:9:4.260 --> 0:9:8.950

Guest

Less green foods and all like, you know, even like coffee or coffee shop cups would have.



0:9:10.400 --> 0:9:21.680

Guest

So that was like impossible. Someone was like recyclable. So I definitely would say that does also come to mind that way. I know how to dispose of it properly without I suppose increase in like caring for print too high.

0:9:24.30 --> 0:9:26.940

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

OK. OK, that's nice.

0:9:27.730 --> 0:9:48.500

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

So I'll go to my third final thing. So question is from where do you buy green products? Is there like any specific supermarket which you buy green products and why if there is, if you buy then the specific reason for it?

0:9:50.80 --> 0:9:50.520

Guest

Uh.

0:9:51.520 --> 0:9:56.700

Guest

Of I'll be honest, I wouldn't say I go to a specialized supermarket. I Morris, go to my local 1.

0:10:0.120 --> 0:10:0.730

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

OK.

0:10:2.990 --> 0:10:8.190

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

OK. So generally you go to any supermarket and you just look for product you mean?

0:10:9.780 --> 0:10:10.910

Guest

Pretty much yes.

0:10:11.450 --> 0:10:12.620

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

Yeah. OK.

0:10:11.920 --> 0:10:14.230

Guest

Because it's just, I suppose, more of a convenience.

0:10:14.940 --> 0:10:16.350

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

Yeah, that's that's true.

0:10:17.370 --> 0:10:48.400

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

So the final question is which product do you consider environmentally friendly? I mean environmentally friendly, like in the manufacturing of product, there are various process involved from collecting raw materials to manufacturing to to like products to keeping products on the sales of the supermarket and then finally to the consumer then waste management. OK, there are various process involved.

0:10:48.700 --> 0:10:56.690

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

In the product, OK. And even the company which manufacturers they like, are they using?

0:10:56.770 --> 0:11:14.750

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak

The energy efficiently or or different different things are involved. So which product do you consider environmentally friendly? Like what are the characteristic of product you think which are environmentally friendly and which you can prefer to buy?

0:11:17.270 --> 0:11:35.880

Guest

Uh uh. I suppose one thing that would go into effect would be the location of where the project came from, because obviously when you're importing exporting foods to different countries, obviously is gonna take, it's gonna be done by either by ship or plane. And I was just going to mids, yeah.

0:11:36.770 --> 0:11:47.640

Guest

You know, carbon into the air and all that, and not even that. I suppose the packaging itself is recyclable or is made from certain plastics seconds. This is all the.

0:11:49.130 --> 0:12:6.240

Guest

Quick enough, so I suppose it's location of like it's origin I suppose. I would be more correct term of where it came from. It's packaging would be another one. And then in terms of my factoring, uh definitely say it definitely does depend on what you use in the materials because.

0:12:6.780 --> 0:12:18.60

Guest

Uh, because even like, when's looking at coconut milk and almond milk? You know, there has been certain indications into almond milk to the amount of water that gets used up to produce the product, and all, you know, the.

0:12:18.920 --> 0:12:38.480

Guest

At the same time, looking at the full fat milk and you know the amount of cows you breed each year to produce milk, and also again it does become the IT does come in some minds when picking up balance certain packages I would say for milk, why is I'll definitely get from Ireland because it's just more.

0:12:39.480 --> 0:12:52.590

Guest

Or well, the for our there when again organic milk, I would definitely try to get it from Ireland. So just because you know our climates, we are one of the best at producing dairy in the world and in Europe.

0:12:53.980 --> 0:12:54.430

Guest  
And.

0:12:54.510 --> 0:12:58.860

Guest  
Uh uh. I suppose first or another products, I would try to.

0:13:1.140 --> 0:13:20.50

Guest  
Makes. Well, I'll say I know exactly the manufacturing process of them, but I would definitely try to. That's at least even the packaging itself is packed. Chinenye indicates proper disposal of it and at the same time that the food, depending on what it's made from an all, will definitely come to mind.

0:13:35.530 --> 0:13:36.60

Guest  
Yes.

0:13:23.450 --> 0:13:36.940

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak  
OK, that's pretty nice, pretty like I would tell you that this was like till now my best interview. I got a good information and good insights from you.

0:13:37.600 --> 0:13:38.330

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak  
So.

0:13:39.290 --> 0:13:45.360

Pawankumar Girishchandra Pathak  
Really. Thanks. Thanks for the interview. So I think my interview is over. I'll stop the recording.

0:13:45.500 --> 0:13:45.730

Guest  
Or.

0:13:47.320 --> 0:13:47.610

Guest  
Yeah.

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