

Green products: digital marketing and consumer behavior for sustainability

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Abstract

The main objective of the current study is to present the potential of digital marketing for green products and especially, to contribute on knowledge regarding the factors that affect online consumer behavior towards green sustainable products. Moreover, the primary research is going to identify the most important factors during the online shopping process, as well as, the existence of statistically significant relationships between the variables of the research and specifically the intention to buy online green products, the factors of perceived value (quality, emotional, price and social), the brand consciousness of customers and consumers' attitude toward green products. A primary quantitative research has been conducted in order to answer on specific research hypothesis that have been stated in the methodology chapter. The main findings of the research illustrate that there are positive relationships between the intention to buy online green sustainable products, the factors of perceived value (quality, emotional, price and social), the brand consciousness of online customers and consumers' attitude toward green products, and with some of the demographic variables.

Keywords: *online consumer behavior, online shopping process, green products, digital marketing, sustainability*

JEL classification: *D1, M3, Q56.*

1. Literature Review

1.1. Introduction

The use of digital technology provides the consumer many benefits such as convenience, efficiency, a rich variety of information, an extensive selection of products, product diversity, competitive prices and cost reduction (Boyo – Moriones and Lera – Lopez, 2007; Tiago and Verissimo, 2014). Digital technologies contribute to the socio-technological progress through marketing services, marketing goods, knowledge transfer, etc. (Koliouka and Andreopoulou, 2020). The creation of a “digital relationship” between the enterprises and the consumers is extremely important (Phillips 2015) as the digital technology re-shapes the marketing strategy and the marketing process (Kannan, 2017). The characteristics of the current digital

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environment are the following: “velocity, intertwinedness and therefore complexity of these elements” (Kung, 2008; Royle and Laing, 2014). Many researchers have already identified the connection between digital marketing and sustainability (Leonidou and Leonidou, 2011) and they have concluded that there is a positive interaction with each other, as sustainability gives advantages to the supply chain processes, the product differentiation, the relations with environmentally conscious investors, or an advanced employee commitment (McDonagh, 2014; Diez-Martin et al., 2019). Entrepreneurs have recognized that green products constitute a powerful competitive tool for economic growth and environmental sustainability (Song et al., 2019; Bernal-Conesa et al., 2017; Chang and Chen, 2013).

Green products are products that are made by taking the impact on the environment into consideration. During the last few years, due to the strong presence of discount stores and the increase awareness of environmental issues, retail chains continually expand the range of green products. Green products, except of being a defensive mechanism towards discount chains, they contribute to the diversification of the commercial chain, greatly expanding the range of products in the online store and the customer's choice, and ensure higher margins. Therefore, the intense competition between retail operators in order to gain greater market share in relation to the increasing online consumers' awareness regarding price and quality issues, contributed to the production of green products (Ashley, 1998). The production of these products is usually done by large companies, based on available technology and at the same or similar standards to those of branded products. In some cases, the retail company participate in the design and product development process, while the name of the chain is an added factor. In the early years of presence of green products, they were characterized as products with high price and high quality. Also distinguished by its simple packaging, the absence of advertising and the limited number of product categories. However, during the recent years the companies continuously expand the number of codes of green products and simultaneously improve the quality of the products as well as there is the upward trend for this product category and is expected to increase during the next years. As a consequence, a large proportion of online consumers now consider green products, as quality products with high performance (Chen, 2014).

1.2. Effects of green products for retailers

The launch of green products on the online market and their development was a chosen strategy in order to improve the image of the stores and their profitability. The main advantage is the growing profit margin of retailers (Ashokkumar, 2009) as a result of the generated cost savings. Retailers buy the products from producers at lower prices since the substantially low production costs cannot play an important part in the bargaining power of producers. In addition, price of green products is low due to the cheap packaging, reduced advertising and low production costs. Also, the market share of green products is relatively satisfactory and retailers appear to be more independent in relation to branded products thus there is an increase in replacement levels and the manufacturers of branded products are forced to increase their online advertising and marketing efforts.

Another advantage for retailers is that the online sale of green products is an opportunity to build the image of the stores. The fundamental requirement of a differentiation strategy is a strong relationship between the online store and the store's image (Gielens, 2012). The image of green products improves the overall image of the online store, the price levels and also it increases the variety of the available options for the consumer. Furthermore, green products differentiate the retailer from the competition and help to increase online customer loyalty (Horvat, 2013) since the green products offered exclusively by the retailer, who produces them.

Finally, an important advantage of selling online green products is considered the consumer's loyalty to the online store (Horvat, 2013). Offering store exclusive products to consumers has as a result stronger relationship between online store and online customer trust since customers generated the same feeling towards the products and the brand of the retailer. With his trademark the retailer guarantees the quality of green products while giving the necessary information on the characteristics of those products.

1.3. Effects of green products for consumers

It has been noticed that as online consumers become more environmentally aware, the entrepreneurs seek to develop green sustainable products ((Chang and Zhang, 2019; Chen, 2001; Pujari et al., 2003). The introduction of green products expands the online consumer choice for every product category (Olbrich and Jansen, 2014). The consumer can choose between branded and more expensive products and green products with high value for money. The consumer is more likely to choose the product that covers in a better way his needs.

The main competitive advantage of green products is their low price. Producers of branded products in order to be able to compete reduce the prices of their products, which can be considered as a direct benefit for the online consumers. As a result, from the intense competition that generated, producers forced to improve the characteristics of their products or use promotions in order to remain competitive. Satisfying those online consumers seeking products with the best price - quality combination is another advantage gained by consumers from buying green products. Quite often online consumers change a product from a particular category simply because they find something better. Many times, for example, may find that they are paying more than they should for a product, but nevertheless they have no other choice.

1.4. How consumers perceive green products

Even today, the loyalty of online consumers to specific products weakens the position of green products. If the price is attractive, the consumer will prefer the branded product. Researchers that have examined consumer perceptions regarding to branded and green products, found that respondents ranked green products lower than branded with the criterion of quality, appearance / image and attractiveness (Perloff et al., 2012). Furthermore, in the same study, the green products generally considered to have good value. The differences between the two product groups in terms of how they perceived by consumers, revealed that green products are a separate category of products (Richards et al., 2015). In contrast to the above findings, other researchers (Bhatt and Bhatt, 2014) have found that consumers perceive the quality of green products, equal to that of branded products. Many researchers support that the reduction of energy consumption constitutes a key element for a better quality of life (Ioannou et al., 2018;

Pasten and Santamarina, 2012; Lambert et al., 2014). Based on statistics of the Private Label Manufacturing Association in collaboration 86% of the respondents in a survey claimed that green products are equal or better to branded products. Furthermore, green products are not the first preference for the consumers as well as that there are the products that immediately withdraw by the consumers (Anderson and Simester, 2014). Compared with established branded products, the authors highlight the existence of basic differences between these two product categories in terms of recall level.

1.5. Factors affecting the acceptance of green products

A lot of research has been done in an international level in order to identify the factors that influence the success of green products. These factors can be grouped as factors associated with the product category, with the store, the economy and the demographic characteristics of consumers (Beneke et al., 2013).

Factors related to product category

The category of products is considered as a very important factor for the acceptance or the rejection of green products by the online consumers. Other research (Nielsen, 2005) showed that 40% of global consumers consider that the green products are not suitable with product categories where the main selection factor is the quality. However, several of them are satisfied with the purchase of green products in categories of products for which they are not interested too much for their quality. The willingness of consumers to buy green products is negative associated with the importance of their purchase (Martinelli et al., 2015). Finally, it has been highlighted that when consumers feel that the product they tend to buy offers high satisfaction, they are willing to buy the product even it has a high price (Pepe et al., 2012). The purchase frequency of the product category is also an important criterion regarding the decision of consumers to buy green products. Also, consumers who buy large quantities of a product category are more likely to switch to a more economical solution, which leads to significant economic benefits (Walsh and Mitchell, 2010). Instead, consumers are willing to pay more in product categories that they do not buy too often (Anderson and Simester, 2014).

Perceptual factors related to the product

The increase in the perceived difference in quality between branded products and green products, the consumers increasingly turning to branded products and they are negatively evaluating the private label category products (Martinelli et al., 2015). Consumers' intention to buy green products are significantly lower if they believe that these products have low quality, they contain less reliable components and are of lower nutritional value than the branded products (Beneke et al., 2013). Finally, the name of the product is one of the most important criteria for evaluating their quality (Walsh and Mitchell, 2010). Another product-related factor is the perceived price and quality levels. The brand that is sold at a high price and with the desired characteristics attaches greater value to the consumer than a brand with lowest price and with less desirable characteristics (Pepe et al., 2012). Finally, the perceived risk is another perceptual factor associated with the product choice. Based on several studies, there is a negative relationship between the perceived risk of the use of green products and their success. For this reason, there is a higher probability for a private label product to be considered as successful and gain market share when it belongs in a specific product category that is associated with low operational and financial risk. The share of green products is 56%

higher in low innovation categories than in highly innovative categories (Olbrich and Jansen, 2014). Green products should be easy to be produced and do not require special expertise, which the manufacturers would not be willing to use them to manufacture green products, but only to produce their own brands (Bhatt and Bhatt, 2014).

Factors related to the store

The factors associated with the online store and affect the acceptance of green products are the image and loyalty in the store. The green products are an extension of the image of the online store (Beneke et al., 2013) Therefore, the online store's image can be considered a major predictor of consumer attitude toward green products. As a result, if a consumer perceived a shop as repulsive and poor, it is likely to form the same concept for the store's green products, resulting in negative behaviour to them (Walsh and Mitchell, 2010). Conversely, if the consumer thinks that an online store has high quality, then it is very likely to purchase the green products of this online shop. The store loyalty is positively associated with a preference of store's green products (Chen et al., 2011). Also, loyalty to the store positively influences the perceived value of private brand (Walsh and Mitchell, 2010). Therefore, the more loyal the consumer is to the online store, the greater the perceived value of the establishment's green products.

Factors related to economy

Research has led to the conclusion that consumption of green products is affected by economic conditions prevailing in the market. When the economy is in recession and economic conditions are unfavourable, there is an increase in the online consumption of green products, and when economic conditions are favourable, then their consumption is reduced. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is an inverse relationship between the economic conditions of the market and the online consumption of green products.

Factors associated with demographic characteristics

The age of the consumers is associated negatively with the acceptance of higher price of branded products. In particular, younger consumers (18-40 years) will pay the highest price to buy a designers' brand, unlike the middle-aged (41-60) and older (61+) who they will pay less (Beneke et al., 2013). This is because, due to the stronger desire for social acceptance and younger online consumers are more oriented to brand image they buy and therefore they are willing to pay a higher price. Finally, the research in Europe (Nielsen, 2005). showed that the middle-aged consumers (41-60) have the largest share of expenditure on green products. Moderate income households are more likely to buy green products than the higher or lower-income households (Chen et al., 2011). On the other hand, lower-income consumers prefer the cheapest private labels when purchasing products (Walsh and Mitchell, 2010). Unlike the low-income online consumers, higher income online consumers buying more national brands and their demand is less elastic for all product categories. Also, the educational level of online consumer plays a role in the acceptance or not of green products. The most educated consumers have a greater opportunity cost in terms of time and therefore they will not bother to look for advantageous offers and they will settle for the consumption of branded and well-known brands (Pepe et al., 2012). Regarding consumer marital status, married couples are more likely to buy green products than bachelors, widowers or divorced (Walsh and Mitchell, 2010). Also, the multimember households (5+ members) are more likely to buy green products due to economic pressure (Burton et al., 1998). Similarly, the global survey (Nielsen, 2005) concludes that households with larger membership allocate a higher share of their total expenditure on green products. Instead,

household size has no significant effect on the probability of green products consumption (Chen et al., 2011). Finally, the consumer's gender affects the acceptance of green products. Women are more sensitive to the quality and thus they show their willingness to pay more for the products they need (Burton et al., 1998).

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Purpose and aim of the primary research

The interest on this specific topic has been aroused by the dearth of a systematic research regarding the factors that affect online consumer behaviour regarding green products in Greek online market. Despite the plethora of such studies regarding online consumer behaviour, which attempted to identify the major predictors of online consumer behaviour in retail industry in countries such as United Kingdom and United States of America, for the Greek marketplace there are only few specific academic attempts. Similarly, a lot of research have been done regarding green products and their effectiveness but only few studies have address green products with consumer behaviour in Greek online market. Under this scope, the objective of this research is to conduct an exploratory research to present the potential of digital marketing for green products and specially to provide a contribution to knowledge in online consumer behaviour regarding green products in Greek market.

A further objective of the research is to illustrate the attitude of Greek online customers, their brand consciousness and the perceived value of green products and make correlations between demographic variables such as gender, household income, age, level of education, and identify and contribute to the existing literature regarding demographic variables and online consumer behaviour. A quantitative research is going to be conducted in order to fulfil the objectives of the research project and the research outcomes will lead to conclusions regarding the Greek online green products market and in combination with the existing literature, it will offer a panoramic view of online consumer behaviour and private label retail products for the Greek online market.

2.2. Research Hypotheses

Taking into careful consideration the findings from the literature review and in accordance with the research objectives, the following research hypothesis were formed.

Hypothesis 1: The most important factors during the online shopping process are quality and price.

Hypothesis 2: There is a statistically significant relationship between the intention to buy online green products and the factors of perceived value (quality, emotional, price and social).

Hypothesis 3: There is a statistically significant relationship between the intention to buy online green products and brand consciousness of online customers.

Hypothesis 4: There is a statistically significant relationship between the factors of perceived value of green products and online consumers' attitude toward green products.

Hypothesis 5: There is a statistically significant relationship between the factors of perceived value of green products and online consumers' brand consciousness.

Hypothesis 6: There is a statistically significant relationship between brand consciousness and online consumers' attitude toward green products.

Hypothesis 7: There is a statistically significant relationship between the attitude against green products and any of the demographic variables (gender, age, education, household income, time spend in the store).

Hypothesis 8: There is a statistically significant relationship between brand consciousness and any of the demographic variables (gender, age, education, household income, time spend in the store).

Hypothesis 9: There is a statistically significant relationship between the factors of perceived value of green products and any of the demographic variables (gender, age, education, household income, time spend in the store).

2.3. Research Process

The recruitment of participants in the primary research took place in the first week of April of 2018. The first five (5) questionnaires were considered as pilot questionnaires in order to make any necessary change and meet the requirements of the investigation. The pilot questionnaires show that the questionnaire was easy to read, navigate and understand, as well as very interesting as a research topic for the participants. All questionnaire items were extracted from well-established scales with high validity that were used in previous studies. Particularly, the different sections of the questionnaire were formed based on the academic articles (Walsh and Mitchell, 2010; Burton et al., 1998). However, necessary changes have been made and some extra questions have been added in order to fulfil the purpose of the research. The questionnaires were sent by e-mail and an additional information sheet and consent form were available in order to let them know the purpose of the research and assure them about the confidentiality of the data, their anonymity and the use of the research outcomes only for academic purposes. Moreover, the respondents were informed that the researcher would be willing to help them with any difficulty in completing the online questionnaire, by answering any possible questions. The analysis of the data was made by with the statistical software for data analysis SPSS. Descriptive statistics were used to illustrate the answers of the respondents on every question while inferential statistics and more specifically ANOVA one-way test and Pearson correlation test were used to identify any relationship between the different variables and answer on the research hypothesis.

2.4. Sampling and Recruitment

The survey population was consisted of individuals, online customers of traditional Greek retail online stores in Thessaloniki from which the researches asked and took permission to send online questionnaires. A non-probability and convenience sampling method was used for the recruitment of the participants on the research. This method was selected in order to have access to a bigger sample. The researcher contacts more than 140 individuals, but only 122 of them express their willingness to participate on the research. Therefore, the sample size consists of 122 respondents. Based on similar previous studies, the sample size can give reliable information and have a positive impact on external validity. Furthermore, the choice of the respondents was made based on specific criteria and specifically the respondents should have been over 18 years old Greek or English speakers (the questionnaire was available in both languages).

2.5. Measures and Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire that was used to provide the researcher with data regarding online consumers’ attitudes toward green products consist of three (3) sections. The first page of the questionnaire being used to present the researcher and inform the respondents about the purpose of the research. Section one (1) consists of the demographic variables (5 questions: gender, age, education, household income and marital statuses). Section two consists of 6 questions regarding the frequency that the customer visits the retail store, the time he spends there, the presentence of his household income that he spends on a particular retail store, the importance of specific factors in the shopping process (8 statements that measured in 5-point Likert type scale where 1= “Not important at all”, and 5= “Very important”), the frequency that he buys green products and finally his intention to buy them. Finally, section three (3) consists of three different metrics, attitude toward private labels (6 statements), brand consciousness (8 statements) and the four factors of consumer’s perceived value of green products (17 statements). All items in section three were measured with a 5-point Likert scale where 1= “Strongly disagree”, and 5= “Strongly agree”).

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive statistics

The research sample consists of males by 61.7% and females by 38.3%. The biggest percentage (32.5%) of the respondents were from 30 to 39 years old, following by those between 18 and 29 years (27.5%). Moreover, 49.2% of the respondents have a university degree, 58.3% have a household income lower than 1000 euros, and regarding their marital status 72.5% are singles. Additionally, 55.8% they visit Retailers’ supermarkets often, 60.8% spends less than 10 minutes in there and 46.1% on their household income for food and other products offered by a retail store.

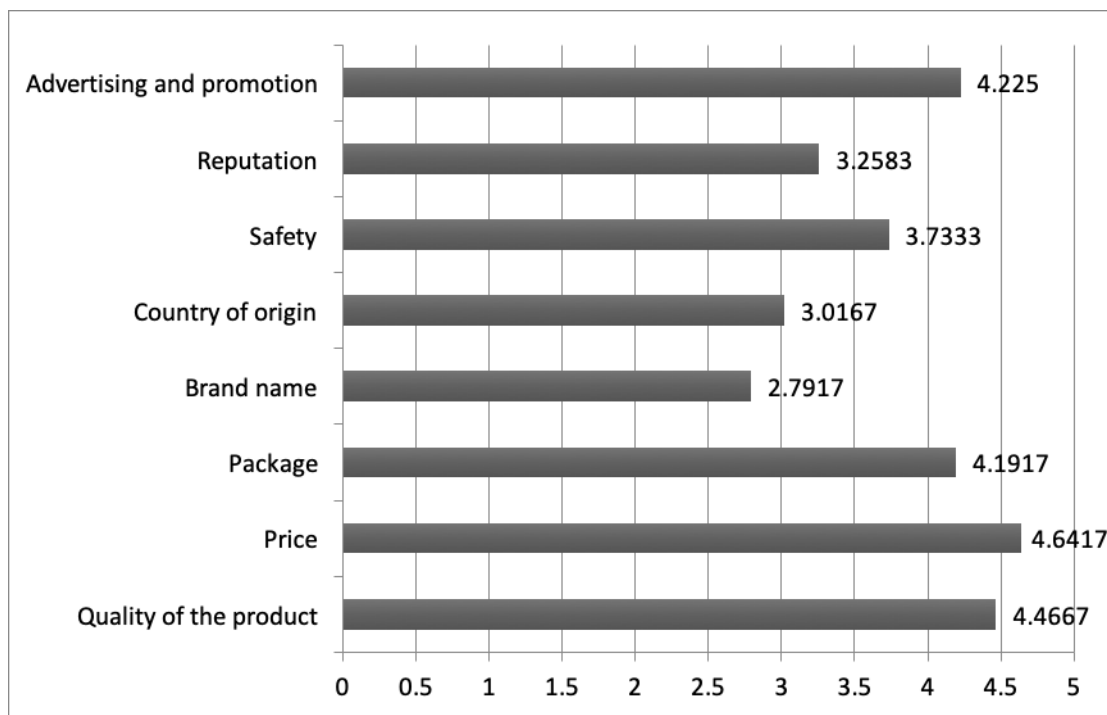


Figure 1: Degree of importance in shopping process

The most important factor during the shopping process is the price (M=4.64) following by the quality of the product (M= 4.46), advertising and promotion (M= 4.22) and package (M= 4.19). On the contrary the less important factors are the country of origin (M= 3.01) and reputation (M= 3.25). As a result, the first hypothesis is accepted.

Additionally, the overall attitude toward green products is positive (M= 3.31). Moreover, the highest percentage of the respondents positively answer that buying online private label brands makes them feel good (M= 3.90) following by those who state that when they buy online a private label brand, they always feel that they are getting a good deal (M= 3.59). The overall brand consciousness is positive (M= 3.14). Furthermore, the highest percentage of the respondents positively answer that they are conscious of getting good value (M= 3.83) following by those who answer that they tend to choose the more expensive brands (M= 3.60) (Table 1).

Table 1: Means of attitude toward private labels

	Mean
Attitude toward private labels	3.31
Buying online private label brands makes me feel good	3.90
I love it when private label brands are available for the product categories I purchase	3.43
For most product categories, the best online buy is usually the private label brand	3.06
In general, private label brands are poor-quality products	2.39
Considering value for money, I prefer private label brands to national brands	3.49
When I buy online a private label brand, I always feel that I am getting a good deal	3.59
Brand consciousness	3.14
I tend to choose the more expensive brands	3.60
The well-known national brands are best for me	3.17
The higher the price of the product, the better the quality	3.40
I am conscious of getting good value	3.83
Online supermarkets with competent staff offer me the best products	2.69
The most advertised brands tend to be a good choice	2.60
Online supermarkets with friendly staff offer me the best products	2.29
A product doesn't have to be perfect, or the best, to satisfy me	3.55

Regarding, the assessment of quality as a value factor is 3.36. Moreover, the highest percentage of the respondents positively answer that green products have poor workmanship (M= 3.54) following by those who answer that green products have consistent quality (M= 3.53). The overall assessment of emotions as a value factor is 3.66. Moreover, the highest percentage of the respondents positively answer that green products would give them pleasure (M= 3.85) following by those who answer that green products would make them want to buy those products (M= 3.83). The overall assessment of price as a value factor is 3.65, while the overall assessment of social features as a value factor is 3.83. (Table 2).

Table 2: Consumer Perceived Value Factor 1: Quality

	Mean
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 1: Quality	3.36
Green products have consistent quality	3.53
Green products are well made	3.37
Green products have an acceptable standard of quality	3.06
Green products have poor workmanship	3.54
Green products would perform consistently	3.31
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 2: Emotions	3.66
I would enjoy green products	3.39
Green products would make me want to buy them	3.83
Green products would make me feel good	3.58
Green products would give me pleasure	3.85
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 3: Price	3.65
Green products are reasonably priced	3.68
Green products offer value for money	3.49
Green products are good products for the price	3.74
Green products would be economical	3.68
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 4: Social	3.83
Green products would help me to feel acceptable	4.36
Green products would improve the way I am perceived	3.63
Green products would make a good impression on other people	3.29
Green products would give its owner social approval	4.06

3.2. Inferential Statistics

- Relationship assessment between intention to buy online green products and the factors of perceived value (quality, emotional, price and social).

Table 3: Relationship assessment between intention to buy green products and the factors of perceived value

	Intention to buy online green products
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 1: Quality	.678**
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 2: Emotions	.764**
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 3: Price	.838**
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 4: Social	.679**

**Correlation is significant at .001

- Relationship assessment between intention to buy online green products and brand consciousness of customers.

The findings show that there is positive correlation between intention to buy online green products and brand consciousness of online customers (The third hypothesis is accepted) (Table 4).

Table 4: Relationship assessment between intention to buy online green products and brand consciousness of online customers

	Brand consciousness
Intention to buy green products	.560**

**Correlation is significant at .001

- Relationship assessment between the factors of perceived value of green products and online consumers' attitude toward green products.

The findings suggest that there are positive correlations between online consumers' attitude toward green products and factors of perceived value (the fourth hypothesis is accepted) (Table 5).

Table 5: Relationship assessment between the factors of perceived value of green products and online consumers' attitude toward green products

	Online consumers' attitude toward green products
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 1: Quality	.191*
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 2: Emotions	.313*
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 3: Price	.459*
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 4: Social	.234*

*Correlation is significant at .05

- Relationship assessment between the factors of perceived value of green products and online consumers' brand consciousness.

It can be concluded that there are positive correlations between online consumers' brand consciousness and factors of perceived value (the fifth hypothesis is accepted) (Table 6).

Table 6: Relationship assessment between the factors of perceived value of green products and online consumers' brand consciousness

	brand consciousness
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 1: Quality	.177*
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 2: Emotions	.136*
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 3: Price	.266*
Consumer Perceived Value Factor 4: Social	.174*

*Correlation is significant at .05

- Relationship assessment between brand consciousness and online consumers' attitude toward green products.

It can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between online consumers' brand consciousness and online consumers' attitude toward green products (the sixth hypothesis is accepted) (Table 7).

Table 7: Relationship assessment between brand consciousness and online consumers' attitude toward green products

	Brand consciousness
Consumers' attitude toward green products	.566**

**Correlation is significant at .001

- Relationship assessment between the attitude toward green products and demographic variables (gender, age, education, household income, time spend in the store).

The age of the respondents is a determinant factor of consumers' attitude toward green products ($F(4,115) = .685, p < .05$). Specifically, it can be concluded that the higher the age of the consumers the more positive their attitude toward green products (the seventh hypothesis is partly accepted). Moreover, the age of the respondents is also a determinant factor of consumers' brand consciousness ($F(4,115) = 7.092, p < .001$). Specifically, it can be concluded that the higher the age of the consumers the lower is their brand consciousness (the eighth hypothesis is partly accepted). Finally, only the net household income of the respondents is a determinant factor of the price as a perceived value factor ($F(3,116) = 2.811, p < .05$). Specifically, it can be concluded that the higher the net household income of the consumers the lower is their perceived value of price (the ninth hypothesis is partly accepted).

4. Discussion

In conclusion, the findings of the research are in line with the academic literature, however, the fact that the research does not reveal relationships between the variables and other demographic characteristics is coming against the findings from other studies. The combination of price and quality is the most common predictor of the value of a product (Lee and Min, 2014). Having in mind the fact that the general economic conditions affect the purchase intention of green products (Chen et al., 2011) and that these conditions have dramatically affect the household income for a big part of the Greek population (Athanasίου, 2009) which also is one of the predictors for online green products' purchase intention and preference, it can be stated that the price of green products can be considered as the main factor that affect the choice of the Greek online consumers. In other words, Greek online consumers have been affected by those factors (economic climate, recession, lower income) and as a result they have become more price sensitive. Price sensitivity and perceived quality relate positive to green products consumption. Thus, the higher the price sensitivity the more space in the market for the green products (Gonzalez-Benito and Martos-Partal, 2014). Additionally, the quality of green products is also important. It is not enough for the online consumers to purchase a product in a low price but they are looking for the best combination of price and quality even than the price of the products is the first factor that affects their purchase under the specific online market conditions. In other words, companies should

design their products under specific quality standards since without quality the products will be ignored despite their low price. Moreover, retailing stores of the retailer have a long presence in the Greek online market and they are associated with high quality products and high image of the online stores. Based on the fact that online store image is positively related to perceived value and quality of green products (Boutsouki et al., 2008) gives the opportunity to retailers' marketing managers to form and implement a strategy for green products that can potentially increase their profits. Additionally, the higher the perceived quality of green products, the higher their demand (Baltas and Argouslidis, 2007) as well as the existence of positive perceptions regarding the quality of green products increase the credibility of the company, which in turn decreases perceived risk (Gonzalez-Mieres et al., 2006). Considering all the above comments and facts it can be stated that the retailer has an opportunity under the specific market circumstances to increase its profits from green products based on their low price and perceived quality.

Moreover, the retail company can take advantage from the research results and reform its positioning and targeting strategy for the green products. Most green products were positioned in the online market as products with low price and moderate quality and they mainly target the online consumers who do not want or they can afford to pay the premium price of national brands (Steenkamp et al., 2010; Cuneo et al., 2015). As it was mentioned on the hypothesis testing, it was found that the age of the online consumers is a determinant factor of their attitude toward green products and specifically the higher the age of the online consumers the more positive their attitude toward green products. Additionally, it was found that the age of the respondents is a determinant factor of their brand consciousness and specifically the higher the age of the online consumers the lower is their brand consciousness, as well as that the net household income of the respondents is a determinant factor of the price as a perceived value factor and that the higher the net household income of the online consumers the lower is their perceived value of price. Based on those findings, the retailer can target on online consumers with high age and therefore low brand consciousness, positive attitude toward green products and lower household income which means high value for the price of the products. The more precise targeting can reduce the risk and money loss for the company in terms of investments on products that addressed to younger online consumers or to online consumers with medium and high household incomes. Therefore, the company can choose specific product categories and target its promotional actions mainly on online consumers with the above characteristics. For example, product categories with similar products with small differences in quality such as the pasta marketplace, can be a potential opportunity since the main online consumers are over some age, with mainly low household income who are driven by price reductions or lower prices in general.

Furthermore, the fact that the relationship between store loyalty and the share of green products is stronger for price-oriented online customers (Koschate-Fiscer et al., 2014; Wu and Wang, 2005) can also add another factor on the targeting decisions since store loyalty is one of the main targets for retailing companies (Sun and Lin, 2010). As a result, green products can also be used as a retention factor or as a potential difference between stores. Regarding the positioning of the products, green products of the retailer can be placed in the online market as products with low price but on the other hand high quality (the image of the company can reduce the risk that is associated with the quality

of green products). Additionally, green products should be treated as regular products without any exception since their value can be important for the future of a company.

In conclusion, the current research provides a contribution on the knowledge regarding green products in the Greek online market place as well as it makes valuable suggestions to the retailer's marketing managers but also to other retailers regarding the strategic choices that can be made in order to improve the market share of their green products. Finally, future research improvements can be suggested. The investigation of price and quality levels for green products and the more effective balance between them can be a future research topic along with the extensive investigation of the relationship between online store loyalty and the factors that affect online consumers' decisions regarding green products.

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