



ECO-FRIENDLY PRODUCTS IN COIMBATORE – PURCHASE ATTITUDE AND PROBLEMS FACED BY CONSUMERS

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ABSTRACT

Customer's attitudes are changing towards the environment to encourage innovation for conservation and the benefits from this source of innovation are certain to outlive our current generation. Consumers today are increasingly "thinking green" and are willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products. The increasing numbers of consumers who prefer and are willing to buy these products are subjected to the buying process. Consumers have different buying attitude and factors influencing the purchase of eco-friendly products in Coimbatore district. Hence, this paper investigates consumers' attitude and behavior on eco-friendly products' purchase along with the problems faced on the same.

Keywords: Eco –friendly Products, Thinking green, Attitude and Behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Consumers are becoming more interested in environmentally friendly products, raising the demand against a limited supply. The green movement has been expanding rapidly in the world. With regards to this consumers are taking responsibility and doing the right things. Consumer awareness and motivation continue to drive change in the marketplace, notably through the introduction of more eco-friendly products. Compared to consumers in the developed countries, the Indian consumer has much less awareness of global warming issues. Successful marketing has always been about recognizing trends and positioning products, services and brand in a manner that supports buyer intentions.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Today, eco-friendly products and their marketing has moved from a trend to a way of doing business and businesses that sell should recognize (a) the value of going green and (b) incorporating this message into their marketing program and communicating the green concept to their consumers. Environmental issues have gained importance in business as well as in public life throughout the world. The term green marketing refers to the strategies to promote products by employing environmental claims either about their attributes or about the systems, policies and processes of the firms that manufacture or sell them (A. Prakash, 2002). Clearly, green marketing is part and parcel of the overall corporate strategy (Menon and Menon, 1997). Along with manipulating the traditional marketing mix (product, price, place and promotion), it requires an understanding of public policy processes. Green marketing also ties closely with issues of industrial ecology and environmental sustainability such as extended producers' liability, life-cycle analysis, material use and resource flows, and eco-efficiency (A. Prakash, 2002). Hence a study has been attempted to analyse the consumers' attitude towards the purchase of eco-friendly products and the behavior on purchase as well as the problems faced during the same.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to American Marketing Association "Green marketing is the marketing of product that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Green marketing includes the developing and marketing such product & services that satisfy the customer requirement for quality, reliable price and easy availability of the product without having a harmful impact on the environment (Mishra and Sharma, 2010; Polonsky, 1994 and Rakshita, 2011). In business, the terms —Green product and Environmental product are used commonly to describe those that strive to protect or enhance the natural environment by conserving energy and/or resources and reducing or eliminating use of toxic agents, pollution, and waste (J. Ottman,1997). A new sense of urgency about Indian environmental degradation has compelled a number of ordinary individuals to make eco-conscious life style changes (Jain & Kaur,

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2004). The environment has become a mainstream issue and consequentially consumers are becoming more concerned about their habits and the effect that these have on the environment (Krause, 1993). Kotler and Armstrong state that a simple model of the consumer decision-making process involves three major components: inputs, process and output (Kotler & Armstrong, 2008). According to them, the input component of the consumer decision-process has external and internal influences. The external influences are the marketing mix activities involving product, promotion, price and place while the internal influences are the socio-cultural environment.

Johri et al (1998) in their study on “Green marketing of cosmetics and toiletries in Thailand” analyzed the green marketing strategy of Thai market. The study was based on case method framed with questionnaire survey to analyze the consumer attitude and brand loyalty towards green marketing strategies. The study found that few companies have made honest attempts to adopt environmental marketing strategy even though Thai customers purchasing decision has not focused more on green attributes. Purohit (2011) in his study on “Consumer buying behaviour on green products” analysed the consumer attitude, roll of marketing mix in buying intention and relationship between consumer attitude and buying intention towards green marketing.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To analyze the consumers attitude and behavior towards the purchase of eco-friendly products.
- 2) To study the problems faced by consumers during the purchase of eco-friendly products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

SAMPLING DESIGN

The study covers the sample of 100 respondents by adapting the Convenience Sampling method. The respondents have been chosen from the various places around the city.

SOURCES OF DATA

The primary data for the analysis has been collected using the questionnaire. The secondary data has been collected from various journals and websites.

TOOLS TO BE APPLIED

The collected data has been applied for analysis using the following tools namely Simple Percentage analysis and Factor analysis.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Table 1
CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS BASED ON GENDER

S. No	Gender	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	48	48
2	Female	52	52
Total		100	100

Source: Primary data

The above table 1 reveals that the 48% of Respondents were belonging to Male, remaining of the 52% of the respondents were Female. Therefore majority of the male respondents were purchased eco-friendly products.

Table 2
CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS ON THEIR AGE

S. No	Age	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	15- 25	16	16
2	25-35	42	42
3	35-45	18	18
4	45- 55	10	10
5	55 and above	14	14
Total		100	100

Source: Primary data

The table 2 shows that 16percent of the respondents are in the Age between 15-25 Years old, 42 percent of respondents are in age between 25-35 years, 18 percent of respondents are in between 35-45 years old age, 10 percent of respondents are in between 45-55 years old age and remaining 14 percent of respondents are Above 55 years old out of 50 Respondents. The ages between 35-45 years are well aware about eco-friendly products.

Table 3
CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS ON THEIR OCCUPATION

S. No	Occupation	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Self-employed	31	31
2	Private employed	19	19
3	Professional	38	38
4	Student	12	12
Total		100	100

Source: primary data

The table 3 shows that 31 % of self-employed, 19 % of Private employed, 38 % of Professional, 12 % of Students out of 50 respondents while buying organic product respectively in study area, so we observe that table and figure it says that more professional peoples are prefers eco-friendly products.

Table 4
HOW LONG INTERESTED IN CONSUMPTION OF ECO –FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

S. No	Duration	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Since 1 year	24	24
2	2 year	12	12
3	3 year	20	20
4	More than 3 year	44	44
Total		100	100

Source: primary data

The table 5 describes the 24 percent of the respondents are purchasing organic food product from one year, 12 percent of the respondents are using since two years, 20 percent of respondent are using three years, and remaining 44 percent of respondent are using eco-friendly products more than three years.

Table 5
INFORMATION ABOUT ECO – FRIENDLY PRODUCTS TO RESPONDENTS

S. No	Information centers	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	By friends/ Family	62	62
2	Direct mailers	22	22
3	Press advertisement	06	6
4	Reference websites	08	8
5	T.V. advertisement	02	2
Total		100	100

Source: primary data

The table 6 shows that information about eco-friendly products to respondent is more from friends/family i.e. 62 percent and second is Direct mailers i.e. 22 percent, 8 percent from Reference websites, 6 percent Press advertisement, and finally only 2 percent T.V advertisement. So the information will be flow about organic shops only by a friends/ Family is more when compared to other information sources.

Table 6
CLASSIFICATION RESPONDENTS BASED ON FREQUENTLY PURCHASE OF ECO – FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

S. No	Duration	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Daily	30	30
2	Monthly	04	4
3	Weekly	60	60
4	Occasionally	06	6
Total		100	100.0

Source: primary data

The table 11 shows that the 60 % of respondents are buying weekly an eco-friendly products, 30 % of Respondents are Daily purchasing, 6 % occasionally buy and remaining 4 % of respondents once a month a purchasing of an eco-friendly products out of 50 Respondents.

Table 7
RESPONDENTS' RANKING FOR ECO –FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

S. No	Opinions	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Outstanding	06	6
2	Excellent	20	20
3	Good	62	62
4	Average	12	12
Total		100	100

Source: primary data

The table 12 indicates majority of the respondent (62%) opinion about eco-friendly products is good, because those people view it is a good for health, and remaining 20 percent respondent opinion that excellent, 12 percent of respondent opinion its average and remaining 6 percent of respondent opinion about eco-friendly products is Outstanding.

Table-8
PURCHASE OF TYPE OF GREEN PRODUCTS

S.NO	PRODUCT	MEAN SCORE	RANK
1	Fruits / Vegetables	639	I
2	Grocery	601	II
3	Medicinal products	567	III
4	House hold products	542	IV
5	Apparel & Clothing	537	V
6	Personal care products(Soaps, Shampoos etc)	525	VI
7	One use products	520	VII
8	Beauty Cosmetics	445	VIII
9	Automobiles and Electronic goods	439	IX
10	Stationeries	392	X

Source: primary data

Table 8 shows the purchase of type of Eco friendly products. Majority of respondents purchase Organic Fruits/Vegetables and ranked I ,II preference were given to grocery, medicinal products were ranked III, the respondents gave IV rank to household products, Apparel and clothing were given V preference, Personal care products were given VI rank, one use products were give ranked VII, Beauty cosmetics as VIII, Automobiles and electronic goods as IX rank and Least preference were given to Stationeries.

Table-9
PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS GREEN PRODUCTS

S. No	ITEM	N	MAX	MIN	MEAN SCORE	INDICATOR
1	Use a low-phosphate detergent or soap	100	5	3	4.56	Strongly Agreed
2	Use only energy efficient electronics/Electrical appliances	100	5	3	3.34	Neutral
3	Always buy one use products that are free of harmful Toxins	100	5	2	4.50	Strongly Agreed
4	Always prefer to buy fruits and vegetables which are organic/free of Carbonate	100	5	3	4.56	Strongly Agreed
5	Try to consume cosmetics products that contain bleach free	100	5	3	3.14	Neutral
6	Conscious to buy shampoos and soaps that are made of herbal extracts	100	5	3	3.60	Agreed
7	Prefer to buy medicinal products that are made off herbal / Ayurvedic	100	5	2	4.46	Strongly Agreed
8	Use automobiles which contribute to least amount of Pollution.	100	5	3	4.36	Strongly Agreed
9	Prefer to buy stationeries made of recyclable materials	100	5	2	3.32	Neutral
10	Buy clothes or apparels made of natural fabric materials	100	5	2	4.32	Strongly Agreed

Source: primary data

The respondents purchasing behaviour of green products such as grocery, one use products, fruits and vegetables, medicinal products, automobiles and apparels and clothing showed as strongly agreed. Personal products showed agreed and the House hold products, beauty cosmetics and stationeries showed neutral behaviour.

Table-10
PROBLEMS IN BUYING BREEN PRODUCTS

S.NO	PROBLEMS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	High price	39
2	Lack of knowledge	20
3	Lack of green product shop	29
4	Non-reliable on quality	12

Source: primary data

Table 10 shows the problems faced by customers in purchasing Eco friendly products. Majority said green products are relatively expensive (39%).29% of the respondents felt lack of green product shop,20% people do not have knowledge about the product, and 12% of the respondents have non-reliable on quality of the product.

CONCLSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study also shows that people in general have lot of concern and strong desire to do something towards environment but they do not know how they can contribute. Hence marketers and Government cannot be individually held responsible but environmental protection agencies, media, must create awareness about green products as a means to save the environment. Marketer should take initiative keeping in the mind that consumer are concerned and willing to do their bit towards environment protection. Marketers by satisfying this urge and desire of consumer towards environment through effective promotional strategies to educate them about green products, their usage and resultant impact on the environment protection will in long run help enhance their goodwill and building strong brand image in the eyes of consumers. Similarly the study points towards the need for an active role on the part of government and various stakeholders in educating the consumers towards being a green consumer. The study's results imply that there is a bright future for eco-friendly market.

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