AN ANALYSIS OF THE ECO CONSCIOUSNESS OF CONSUMERS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHENNAI CITY

DR.S.MAYILVAGANAN,
Assistant Professor of Commerce,
A.V.C. College (Autonomous),
Mayiladuthurai,
Mannampandal-609305.
Nagapattinam district,
Tamil Nadu.
India.

V.SOWMYA,
Full Time PhD Research Scholar in Commerce,
A.V.C.College (Autonomous),
Mayiladuthurai,
Mannampandal-609305.
Tamil Nadu.
India.

ABSTRACT

This study deals with the ecological consciousness of the consumers and to what level does this eco consciousness helps in green consumer behavior. The research is done with primary data that is collected from a number of 560 respondents and the data is analysed with statistical tools namely correlation coefficient and Friedman test. The result of the study reveals that consumers are more aware of the environmental problems prevailing and hence they are likely to develop green purchasing behavior after analyzing the environmental impact of any product they purchase.

KEYWORDS: Eco consciousness, awareness, environmental knowledge, environment and consumer's green purchasing behaviour

I. INTRODUCTION

Consumers buy a product to satisfy their needs and wants. The ecological consequences of the product that the consumer purchases are not transparent enough and these ecological consequences are encountered while manufacturing the product, packing, distributing or promoting. When a product does not produce any negative impact on the environment from the time of manufacture to the time of disposal it is known as environmentally safe. A consumer who is aware of the impact of any product that he purchases that is caused on the environment will hesitate to buy it. Such an intention is known as eco consciousness of the consumer. This paper discusses about the eco consciousness of the consumers with the help of statistical tools.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know about the environmental values and ethics of the consumers
2. To study about the awareness of the consumers regarding toxic ingredients and eco labels
3. To analyse the environmental knowledge of the consumers and their ability to identify eco friendly products

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The responsibility of consumers is not only limited up to buying a product and using it. He should also be concerned about the way in which the product has an impact on the environment and human health. When consumers start behaving in an environmentally responsible manner it is more likely that companies

also start incorporating environmental policies in their decision making. It is necessary to know the knowledge of consumers in environmental safety measures and it is important to study about their environmental values. The eco consciousness of the consumers is an important area of research to study in order to understand the awareness of consumers regarding environmental protection and to what level they are applying their environmental values on their purchasing behavior.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is made with special reference to Chennai city, Tamil Nadu. A total number of 560 respondents were selected from Chennai city for sampling purpose. Convenient sampling technique was used to collect data. The data is collected with the help of structured questionnaires after making reliability testing among 50 respondents. Primary data is used for the study to analyse the eco consciousness of the consumers. The questionnaire was prepared with likert's five point scale such as extremely aware, somewhat aware, moderately aware, not aware and not at all aware. The statistical tools used for the study are Karl pearson Correlation coefficient and Friedman's test.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 showing Pearson Correlation Coefficient between Factors of Eco Consciousness

Factors of Eco Consciousness	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
I	1.000	0.364**	0.449**	0.348**	0.379**	0.270**
II	-	1.000	0.439**	0.381**	0.294*	0.124**
III	-	-	1.000	0.518**	0.488**	0.240**
IV	-	-	-	1.000	0.633**	0.309**
V	-	-	-	-	1.000	0.343**
VI	-	-	-	-	--	1.000

Source: Computed from primary data
Note: ** denotes significant at 1% level
In the above table,
I denotes Environmental Values
II denotes Awareness of environmental issues
III denotes Environmental knowledge
IV denotes Awareness of toxic ingredients
V denotes Awareness of eco labels
VI denotes Identification of eco friendly products

The correlation coefficient between environmental values and awareness of environmental issues is 0.364 which indicates 36.4 percent positive relationships between environmental values and awareness of environmental issues and is significant at 1% level. The correlation coefficient between environmental values and environmental knowledge is 0.449 which indicates 44.9 percent positive relationship between environmental values and environmental knowledge and is significant at 1% level. The correlation coefficient between environmental values and awareness of toxic chemical ingredients is 0.348 which indicates 34.8 percent positive relationship between environmental values and awareness of toxic chemical ingredients and is significant at 1% level. The correlation coefficient between environmental values and awareness of eco labels is 0.379 which indicates 37.9 percent positive relationship between environmental values and awareness of eco labels and is significant at 1% level. The correlation coefficient between environmental values and identification of eco friendly products is 0.270 which indicates 27.0 percent positive relationship between environmental values and identification of eco friendly products and is significant at 1% level.

The correlation coefficient between awareness of environmental issues and environmental knowledge is 0.439 which indicates 43.9 percent positive relationship between awareness of environmental issues and environmental knowledge and is significant at 1% level. The correlation coefficient between

awareness of environmental issues and awareness of toxic chemical ingredients is 0.381 which indicates 38.1 percent positive relationship between awareness of environmental issues and awareness of toxic chemical ingredients and is significant at 1% level. The correlation coefficient between awareness of environmental issues and awareness of eco labels is 0.294 which indicates 29.4 percent positive relationship between awareness of environmental issues and awareness of eco labels and is significant at 1% level. The correlation coefficient between awareness of environmental issues and identification of eco friendly products is 0.124 which indicates 12.4 percent positive relationship between awareness of environmental issues and identification of eco friendly products and is significant at 1% level.

The correlation coefficient between environmental knowledge and awareness of toxic chemical ingredients is 0.518 which indicates 51.8 percent positive relationship between environmental knowledge and awareness of toxic chemical ingredients and is significant at 1% level. The correlation coefficient between environmental knowledge and awareness of eco labels is 0.488 which indicates 48.8 percent positive relationship between environmental knowledge and awareness of eco labels and is significant at 1% level. The correlation coefficient between environmental knowledge and awareness of eco labels is 0.240 which indicates 24.0 percent positive relationship between environmental knowledge and identification of eco friendly products and is significant at 1% level.

The correlation coefficient between awareness of toxic chemical ingredients and awareness of eco labels is 0.633 which indicates 63.3 percent positive relationship between awareness of toxic chemical ingredients and awareness of eco labels and is significant at 1% level. The correlation coefficient between awareness of toxic chemical ingredients and identification of eco friendly products is 0.309 which indicates 30.9 percent positive relationship between awareness of toxic chemical ingredients and identification of eco friendly products and is significant at 1% level.

The correlation coefficient between awareness of eco labels and identification of eco friendly products is 0.343 which indicates 34.3 percent positive relationship between awareness of eco labels and identification of eco friendly products and is significant at 1% level.

Table 2 showing Friedman test for significant difference among mean ranks towards factors of level of eco consciousness

Factors of Level of Eco Consciousness	Mean Rank	Chi Square value	P value
Environmental Values	3.54		
Awareness of environmental issues	4.63		
Environmental knowledge	3.92	971.313	<0.001**
Awareness of toxic ingredients	2.32		
Awareness of eco labels	2.07		
Identification of eco friendly products	4.51		

Source: Computed from primary data
Note: ** denotes significant at 1% level

Since P value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level of significance. Hence it is concluded that there is significant difference among mean ranks towards factors of level of eco consciousness. Based on the mean ranks, awareness of environmental issues (4.63) is the factor that has high number of consciousness among various factors of eco consciousness which is followed by identification of eco friendly products (4.51) and environmental knowledge (3.92) and so on.

Therefore consumers are much more aware of environmental issues among various factors of environmental awareness. This shows that consumers are aware of the environmental threats prevailing in today's world due to the urge to look after those threats. Becoming aware of these environmental threats helps them to realize the cause for those threats and the manner of finding a solution to these threats which is by way of encouraging the production of more products that does not cause any harm to the environment

or causes less harm to the environment. Thereby they are pursued to purchase environmentally friendly products by identifying green products. The manner of identification of green or environmental products is the second highest mean rank among various factors in environmental values. This is supposed to mean that consumers are able to differentiate green products from that of synthetic products.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the more knowledgeable one remains regarding the environmental issues and preservation of environment, he is less likely to pollute the environment or to engage in any kind of materialistic activities that puts the environment at stake and he is more likely to be aware of the toxic ingredients and aware of eco labels. A consumer who is said to have environmental knowledge can identify a product that is eco friendly and prevent environmental degradation to a maximum level by his green purchase behavior. Environmental values should be developed for each person as it can have an effect on protecting and safeguarding the earth and species that are living on it. Living a simple and more eco friendly lifestyle has to be insisted for consumers starting right from what they purchase. When a person buys only what is needed, it may reduce the amount of wastage which in turn can have a positive effect on landfills and can reduce pollution to a maximum possible extent. As consumers are more aware of the existing environmental issues they should be taught about the ways and means of solving these environmental problems by way of implementing green purchase behavior. To sum up, when consumer's eco consciousness shows an increase it will result in the growth of green consumer behavior. Green consumer behavior is confined with purchase of a product that satisfies the needs of the consumer without polluting the environment in any way.

VII. REFERENCES

- Ottman JA. Stafford ER. Hartman CL. 2006. Avoiding Green Marketing Myopia: Ways to Improve Consumer Appeal for Environmentally Preferable Products. Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development 48 (5): 22 – 36. DOI: 10.3200/ENVT.48.5.22-36
- Biel A, Dahlstrand U. 2005. Values and habits: a dual-process model. In Environment, Information and Consumer Behaviour, Krarup S, Russell CS. Edward Elgar: Cheltenham; 33-50.
- Williams K, Dair C. 2007. A Framework of Sustainable Behaviours that can be Enabled through the Design of Neighbourhood-Scale Developments. Sustainable Development 15, 160–173. DOI: 10.1002/sd.311